

# THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

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## Notes of Recent Exposition.

OUR series 'After Fifty Years,' we may be permitted to remark, shows quite clearly that, within the limited field of study with which it is concerned, while undoubted progress has been made, that progress has consisted to no inconsiderable extent in the discovery and frank acknowledgment of the fact that the problems are more complicated than half a century ago they were thought to be.

Within a much wider area of thought than that series contemplates the same thing has happened. Men have become chary of speaking of 'assured results.' Since Einstein, does even the Multiplication Table stand unscatheable?

Those remarks are suggested by one of the interesting articles which Mr. Bernard Lord MANNING has collected and published as *Essays in Orthodox Dissent* (Independent Press; 5s. net). They were 'written for many divers sorts of people on many different sorts of occasions'; and were well worth this more permanent form. The essay we have in view is the one entitled 'The Witness of History to the Power of Christ.'

Mr. MANNING begins by warning of the danger of an appeal to history of the kind that used to be so common and was so unconvincing. 'All history shows,' 'the verdict of history is'—something that on quite insufficient grounds the speaker is anxious to demonstrate. How often we have all heard it, and been sometimes amazed, sometimes amused,

most frequently irritated. Such speakers put history into the witness-box and ask it leading questions. Mr. MANNING has no difficulty in showing that on many questions very different answers could be extorted from the badgered witness 'history' by a cross-examining counsel whose aim was contrary.

What our author is concerned to warn us against is the facile optimistic view of history as fitted to prove our own pet theories or too easily justify the ways of God. We have to recognize that it is not historically true that everything that happened has been for the best, or that it is always the case that 'Truth like a torch the more 'tis shaken, shines.' History bears witness to the defeats of Christianity, as well as its triumphs.

If we agree with that, and disagreement is unthinkable, what follows? Does history confront us with the same kind of problem about God as a review of Nature which sometimes seems to be friendly to man, sometimes hostile, and often indifferent? Does history bear any clear witness to the power of Christ?

Of course it does. Like Lord Acton Mr. MANNING would say that history is the surest evidence of religion in general, a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. Only we must learn to understand and not look to history for what it cannot give, and beware of finding in specific happenings which we only imperfectly understand evidence of some pet theory.



A study of history induces a humility which is the prerequisite of expressing judgments on contemporary people and contemporary movements. 'It provides a standard of values and a sense of proportion.' 'To every generation its own problems are unprecedented and its own novelties new. But, if you have listened to Lucretius, you do not jump out of your skin when Sir Arthur Keith speaks out.' If this reduces the proportions of the critics of Christianity, admittedly it reduces those of contemporary Christianity also. Yet 'history deals more unkindly with the fads of our contemporaries than with the historic forces against which they hurl themselves.'

The historian cannot but perceive the magnitude and importance of Christian civilization. He may like or dislike it but he cannot ignore it. It is fashionable to criticise and censure it. The exotic, the remote are praised in contrast. But Mr. MANNING is convinced that a full review of Christian civilization with all its admitted blots and those exotic paradises far away with all their admitted merits will clearly demonstrate that in reality there is no worth-while comparison between the two, but much more glaring contrast. Communism may be better than Capitalism—Mr. MANNING has an open mind on the subject, but he is sure that if Communism comes to a Christian civilization it will make the non-Christian Russian experiment 'look silly.'

History shows us Western Europe and America as one of the greatest human attempts at living in society; when all deductions are made, the most successful, the most human, the most kindly yet known. 'And history shows us the power of Christ as one of the most characteristic, most potent, most essential features of this society.' It is Christianity that has begotten and fostered whatever is best and kindest in Western civilization. It is worked inextricably into its very fabric.

In the Spring number of the Christian quarterly, *Religion in Life* (published by the

Abingdon Press, New York), there is an article by Emil BRUNNER on 'The Present-Day Task of Theology.' It bears the marks of being an address delivered by him at Princeton in the course of his recent sojourn there as a visiting professor. It should be at once interesting and useful to see what one of the most distinguished of contemporary theologians has to say about his own professional task.

He begins by saying that the task of theology is essentially the same in all ages. The reason being that God has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ once for all. As there is but one God, so there is also but one Mediator between God and man, Himself man, Christ Jesus who gave Himself a ransom for all. And there is none other salvation.

This does not mean that God is not a living God who works in our time as well as when He became flesh in Jesus Christ. But what He does in our time is not the same as what He did then. 'What He does since the day of Pentecost is that through His Holy Spirit He brings men to this Cross, to this His own Son, as to the place where the fountain of life has been once for all opened, so that every one who drinks of it is filled with that new life which is in kind eternal life.'

Here is sound evangelical doctrine, with the Barthian emphasis (if the epithet may be allowed) on the uniqueness and finality of the Christian religion. In Jesus Christ God speaks to us in the final way. He is the Word of God. And in this phrase there is embedded a theology, which is an intellectual elaboration of the knowledge of God and His Word which is inherent in Christian faith.

Why should we need this intellectual elaboration? Because theology has a necessary service to render to the Church and to humanity. In the first place, the Church has to keep watch that the Word of God in Jesus Christ be not falsified, that indeed it be better understood. It took much theological work to save the Christian message from the Arians and the Pelagians in the ancient Church, and to bring



about that vindication of its truth which we call the Reformation. In the second place, if there were no theology the educated part of a given society would probably never be reached by the truth of the Christian gospel. BRUNNER confesses that he himself would probably never have become a Christian without the help of theological thought both on the part of others and on his own part. He knows from experience that theology is a means of evangelism.

But if theology, as stated at the outset, has essentially the same task in all ages, it has to do its work in every age anew. The Word of God is not a given system of doctrines, in which case the work of theology could be done at a certain time once and for all. The Word of God is God in His self-revelation in Jesus Christ. And, as the apostles knew and show, there is a mystery here which escapes anything like a final expression. Luther knew it too, and that is why he attacked the Catholic doctrine of the infallible dogma and the infallible Church.

Not only is no theology final, and the limitations of every age call for the corrections of the next, but its task of teaching how to preach necessitates that the theologian should know his time and adapt his formulas accordingly. And the characteristics of the modern world are secularism, which is virtually atheism, and paganism, which is the divinization of the world and of man. Even the Christian Church takes an unconvincing stand for the gospel truth.

BRUNNER sees two main features akin to secularism and paganism in which the predicament of the Church presents itself. On the one hand, the Church's message is secularized in a rationalist or naturalist theology: it is not the gospel of God's grace in Christ that many teach and preach but some philosophical or mystical or moralistic substitute for it. On the other hand, the Church's profession is belied by its example: professing Christians do not win personal confidence by their way of living. Before the Church can convert the world she must herself be converted.

BRUNNER appears to us to take a somewhat dark view of the state both of the world and of the Church, but here are his conclusions: (1) Theology has to make a fresh endeavour to interpret for our time what the Word of God in Jesus Christ means. (2) Theology must be in its own character an evangelizing agency, breaking down the barrier between scientific knowledge and Christian doctrine. (3) Theology must be capable of awakening a missionary evangelistic zeal in the ministers of the Word in showing them that Christian faith is primarily concerned not with doctrines but with the living Christ, who died for our sins and is risen for our sanctification. (4) Theology should lead to a real prayer life, for prayer is faith in action.

If it were not for the critical international situation we should all be deeply interested in Palestine and its future, in the question of a National Home for the Jews and all the questions that gather round this. And even in spite of the international situation many will find room in their minds for interest in a question like *What Are the Jews?* This is the title of a book on the significance and position of the Jews in the modern world. It is written by a Jewish Rabbi, Israel I. MATTUCK, A.M., D.H.L., and published by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton at 5s. net. One cannot but admire two things about this book: its high intellectual quality, and its amazing tranquillity. Dealing with matters that rouse hot passion and hot words the author is always calm, tolerant, and generous.

The book states the non-Zionist or anti-Zionist view of the history and future of the Jews. But in order to present his anti-Zionist case with success the author has to consider the past of the Jew and his present position and claims. What are the Jews? Are they a race? Are they a nation? Are they a religion? There are 15,000,000 or 16,000,000 of them in the world. Russia has about 3,000,000; Poland the same number; the United States has four and a half millions, the largest of any nation; and in the British Isles there are about 300,000. The Jews have been Europeans for twenty centuries. They are divided nationally. There are



French Jews, German Jews, Russian Jews. They are divided religiously. Liberal Judaism has departed far from Orthodox Judaism. It rejects the hope of a personal Messiah and the traditional Jewish attitude to the Bible. But in spite of these divisions the Jews are a unity. What is it?

Are they a *Race*? The answer is 'no.' Certainly not biologically. 'There are no racial traits that belong to the Jews universally. . . . ' The Jews of Abyssinia are black; in China they are yellow; in India they are brown. The Jews in Arabia and Egypt are like the Arabs. Biologically, the Jews approximate everywhere to the non-Jewish people among whom they live. And the psychological differences are as great as the biological. In their general outlook upon life, in their mode of thinking, the native Jews of India differ from the native Jews of England as much almost as the other Indians differ from other Englishmen. Even the physical appearance, which is regarded as 'Jewish,' is characteristic of the Jews of Eastern Europe and came from them as they migrated westward. We must not be deceived by such terms as 'Semitic' and 'Aryan' which, as has often been shown, are names not of races but of languages. Yet there is a Jewish unity. What is it?

Are they a *Nation*? The answer is 'no.' They were once a nation in Biblical times. But since A.D. 70 they have ceased to be a nation—indeed since 538 B.C. Since that date they have never been a political unit. Dispersion has been their permanent condition. And they have come to belong wholly to the nationality in which they have found their resting-place. The British Jew is as British as any other Briton. The German Jew has been loyal to Germany. He has regarded himself as a German and loved Germany. It is part of his purgatory that he has been driven out of the land and home he loves. For twenty centuries the Jews have not been a nation. And therefore Jewish Nationalism, or Zionism, is a purely modern development.

Dr. MATTUCK is a convinced opponent of Jewish Nationalism. But he states the case for Zionism

and the demand for a 'National Home for the Jews' in Palestine fairly. The burden on the Jews, so the argument runs, is that everywhere they are a minority. Politically they are subject to the will of a majority that is not always friendly. Spiritually they suffer under the pressure of an environment dominated by non-Jewish influences which prevent them from expressing their inner life. Palestine suited specially those who felt the 'spiritual' impulse to Jewish nationalism. There they might express themselves and develop a purely Jewish 'culture.' Only in a national homeland of their own can the Jews be spiritually effective and culturally creative.

Dr. MATTUCK's answer is this. Jewish nationalism, which is modern nationalism talking Hebrew, is not the same as the historic unity of the Jews. That is purely religious. Except for a short period there never has been a Jewish nation. There is no such thing as a Jewish 'culture.' What in the arts is described as 'Jewish' is simply Russian or Polish. There is no Jewish sculpture or painting. There is not even any Jewish music. So called Jewish melodies turn out on investigation to be folk-songs of the countries in which the Jews live. The melody used by the Zionists for their 'National' Anthem is a Slavic folk-song.

As to a National Home in which to develop the peculiar contribution of the Jew, Dr. MATTUCK points out a decisive fact. There are fifteen or sixteen million Jews in the world. Palestine can absorb at the most one million. In the fifteen or sixteen years since the Mandate about 300,000 Jews have settled in Palestine. This is a small number in comparison with the number that needs a refuge. The 'return of the Jews to Palestine' is a fiction. Actually, one-quarter of one per cent. have gone there. Of Jews in Germany only a mere fraction have gone to Palestine. How can Palestine be regarded as a 'Land of Refuge' for the Jew and a 'National Home' when such a minute fragment could alone be received there?

It would be much better for the Jews in Palestine, for their economic welfare, if the idea of the National



Home were dropped. A Palestine under England's protection and control would have been a safe place for Jews without a Jewish *national* homeland, much safer than with nationalist politics. The Arab's opposition to Jewish immigration has been caused by political fears. If the fears had not been roused, a large difficulty in the way of immigration would have been avoided. There is good ground for believing that, if the coming of Jews to Palestine were freed from political significance and from the declared Zionist political nationalism, more Jews could settle in the land.

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What, then, of the future of the Jew? The key to that lies in the fact that the significance of the Jew lies in his religion. That is what gives him distinctiveness. That is what explains his unity and his endurance. The Jews are a *people of religion*. They are a people, a group, a community, but the essence of their collective existence is to be found in their religion. A 'people of religion' means a group with its corporate feeling rooted in religion and its collective life directed to religious ends. It means, too, that religion is the nexus between it and its individual members. This is the real mission of the Jews, to witness by their collective existence to the faith of their fathers and their own faith.

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You ask, why do not the Jews send out missionaries, if their witness is religious? The answer is that in the Jewish conception their mission is a

collective one, attaching to the Jewish people as a whole. Individual Jews contribute to it by their lives which show the power of the Jewish religion. That means that all Jews are missionaries. The mission does not require that individual Jews should devote themselves separately to missionary activity, aiming to convert non-Jews to Judaism. That belongs to the collective life of the Jews. Not upon Jews individually, but upon the Jews collectively, lies primarily the task of making the Jews' contribution to the religious life of humanity. And this means that the mission of the Jew is to humanity not to individuals, to influence the religious life and spiritual development of mankind.

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What, then, is the future of the Jews? Not certainly in a National Home in Palestine. Their future lies in two things—separation and distinctiveness in religion, assimilation in everything else. They will always be a dispersion. And in all matters except one they will identify themselves with the nations among whom they live. In one matter they will always be separate. They are a people of religion who, because of their history and circumstances, are conducting an experiment in spiritual power. Their future history will solve the question whether a people can live by religion. That is their first value to the world. The second lies in their distinctive religious ideas, which, because they are distinctive, would bring enrichment to the spiritual life of humanity. This is their future and their supreme witness.

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## Problems of To-day.

### X. The Nature of our Knowledge of God.

BY PROFESSOR JOHN LINE, EMMANUEL COLLEGE, TORONTO.

THE question of the nature of man's knowledge of God has a relevancy in our time to the general concerns of religion, such as it has not had in any previous age. In every period of religious history doubts concerning the being of God or the possibility of knowledge of Him have arisen among philosophers and others who made the grounds of religion a matter for inquiry. But the multitude of plain believers paid little heed, being content to let philosophical disputation have little part, directly at least, in determining their belief. To-day, however, we look out upon a different scene. The questioning of the fact of God, and especially of the power of the human mind to know, even if God exists, of what nature He is, has become commonplace; it affects the position of religion among the whole people as well as among the more special groups. The uncertainty or scepticism, that seems an eccentricity even in the philosopher when we meet it in other epochs, is among ourselves a part of the prevailing mood. It is not simply that our world is largely indifferent to religion; but even where religion is thought enough about for discussion of it to occur, the interest is turned not toward acknowledging its claims so much as toward the query whether its beliefs have any sure basis, even though it may be owned that to prove them false is equally beyond our power.

The reason for this state of things presents a paradox. For it lies in part in the successes of that will to acknowledge in man which here he distrusts. Our religious doubt concerning our power to know is the outcome of what in other spheres we have come to know. This is seen in two ways. The first is included in the general effect of science and advancing knowledge on religious ideas. During many centuries, for example, religious people believed that knowledge of God which men could not attain to themselves had been made possible for them by God's own act. God had revealed Himself to them, and the Bible and the Church were divinely appointed media to preserve and attest the revelation. But historical and other inquiry has shown Church and Bible to embody constituent human elements to such a degree as to render problematic their right to certify any

beliefs that are not already, on ordinary grounds of evidence, receivable as true. This is the first way in which widening knowledge has weakened confidence in our religious knowledge. The second is cognate to it: it lies in the fact that in this same scientific advance, the human mind has proved its power in so many ways, has shown itself so capable of reading the world's secrets and adding to man's understanding, that to postulate extra ways or sources of knowledge, as the doctrine of Revelation seems to do, is unnecessary and incongruous. What means of knowledge can or need there be besides those by which science has unrolled the map of the universe, both on its macrocosmic and microcosmic side! Yet with all its triumphs, science has not been able to decide the issue of the reality of God. Its achievements have given the human mind enormous assurance of its competence to conduct man's search for truth, but they have not enabled science to number God among its certainties. The same process by which science has vastly increased man's comprehension of the natural world has revealed the impotence of science before problems of ultimate existence. Thus in these two ways men have become, through the growth of knowledge itself, at the place where God is its object, sceptical of their power of knowledge.

These developments have placed the religious man in a dilemma. He sees man's mental conquests producing, not increase in religious certitude, but decline: on the one hand, through impugning the documental and institutional supports of that certitude; on the other, through their own open failure at the point most critical for it. Science has impaled religion on a species of cruel epistemological irony; what it has learned about the world would permit us to know more about the ways and works of God than ever before, had it not by the same feat and to about the same degree made us less certain about God.

In the face of the issue that has thus arisen, people are behaving as always in different ways. Many there are to whom any questioning of religious faith at the instance of science, leaves no choice but to cease to believe. In science they put their trust, and if the Christian conception of God



cannot be confirmed by science, they straightway reject the conception.

But others, who are also in their measure deferential to science, are not taking this step. It is with the predicament of these that we are here concerned. They acknowledge the significance and value of scientific search, and wherever science is competent to teach they are eager to learn. But they are theists none-the-less. They fall into two general groups.

There are those, first, whose esteem for science extends to acceptance of its authority even in the religious field. But instead of abandoning the idea of God because in its historic form it appears not to be verifiable by science, they re-formulate the idea to make it identifiable with some reality of experience which science does attest. They re-define the theistic concept to set it in accord with what reflection upon the data of science adduces as an incontestable principle of being. On such a definition God at once becomes knowable, since in order to apprehend Him no manner or method of understanding is needed save the one employed by science.

An instance of this first trend in the philosophical theology of our time is the conception of God that gains its credence from the facts of emergent evolution. These facts show Nature to be creatively and continuously at work with her instrument of synthesis by which she has achieved the various stages of evolutionary advance. Synthesis determines all orders of events in the space-time field; it is the instituting of novel relatedness among given stuffs whereby entities are formed whose qualities are not the additive sum of those of their components, but are unique in the context of each entity. Each unitary being, in other words, is constituted by the concreting of parts into a complex, organic whole. And viewing the world itself as complex and unitary, it too can be pictured as organic in the same form. Entities macrocosmic and microcosmic alike are of the organic mode; each is a concrete unity forming by singular integration of all that is relevant to its formation in existence as a whole.

Now the principle of things by which events are so created and ordered is not only a stupendous property of the world; as that by which all existents, in the way just indicated, are constituted as real, it gives reality to the world. Named the Principle of Concretion, it is not an inappropriate term for the idea of God. God then becomes that which is constituent of all forms of being; that by which the world has its being as an actual world.

He is the element of determination by which everything is a definite this or that. Let it be said that no attempt is here being made to outline the thought of any particular philosopher, but just to give a hint of an idea of God that keeps close to scientific testimony concerning Nature's actual ways and is therefore consistent with adherence to science. It involves no assumptions that exceed the purview of science. Thus it is typical of our first group in offering an alternative form of theism to the one challenged by science, such as will permit a unification of fidelity to science and continuance of belief in God.

Before forming a judgment upon this way of retaining the idea of God when science fails to validate it in its traditional form, let us glance at our second group and the course taken by them.

This consists again in conceding all the claims of science in its own domain, but denying to it special religious import, especially in its bearing on our present theme, the Christian doctrine of God. This doctrine by its very nature cannot have, nor does it need, confirmation at the hands of science. Christianity has resources of truth and knowledge from which science, as such, is debarred; its belief in God has its being as a conviction of faith such as could not be reached by the procedures of science, and such as it is not within the competence of science to establish or annul.

There is a vast difference between these two positions. Both allow the rights of science and both maintain the form of belief in God. But the one makes the belief consonant with science, taking its stand on the principle of the unity of all truth. The other upholds the integrity of the Christian doctrine of God with or without the sanction of science. For a reason that will appear we shall proceed ourselves by evaluating the first of these attitudes from the point of view of the second. From this point of view, where theistic faith is unqualified by any impingement of science, the idea of God of the other group, or any naturalistic idea, falls fatally short. For Christianity conceives God, not as Process or Principle however vital to the ordering of the world, but as the Eternal Personal Spirit who of His prior initiative and creative power called all things into being, who wills and intends whatever by Him is wrought, and has foresight of the ends it is directed to fulfil. 'Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world' (Ac 15<sup>18</sup>). This is the God to whom religious people pray, the God who consciously loves and cares and designedly acts in their behalf. Such a doctrine of God has only a



relation of contrast to one that makes Him primarily a principle or *nisus* or force, without knowledge or consciousness except as or until this becomes biologically emergent in the course of the world.

In the light of this contrast we can now make the problem of this article more precise. It comes to this. Science is our human knowing; but, as we have just implied, when men affirm fully the Christian belief in God, they step beyond science. Can they know, then, the God they affirm, and if so, What is the manner of that knowing? This is the issue intended by our title, *The Nature of our Knowledge of God*.

What we have to say thereupon will depend on what we believe concerning Divine Self-Revelation. We referred before to the crisis of this belief in modern religious thought. It is a further fact, however, that there is now in process a re-valuation of this belief throughout the entire theological world. We are hearing anew that, beyond the knowledge that we have through philosophy and science, there is God's gift of knowledge. 'Men can know the Word of God,' says Karl Barth, 'because and so far as God wills that they should know it' (*Church Dogmatics*, i. 224).

The present writer believes in this doctrine of Revelation, but one frequently encounters a certain defence of the doctrine that seems to him very dubious. It proceeds on this wise. The principle of Revelation, so it is urged, is valid if for no other reason than that it has its exact parallel in the practice of science. Science no less than Theology has its unproved axioms. It assumes, for example, the validity of analysis, the competence of the rational instrument within given bounds, the rational reducibility or uniformity of natural existence whether empirically known or unknown, and hence the continuity of the unknown with the known. These are postulates of science which it cannot verify, but which are indispensable to it; without them it would lack the motive and the means to organize its effort. This being so, it can be claimed for Theology, that though its doctrine of Revelation is non-demonstrable to unbelieving minds, yet in taking its stand upon it, it is on as sure ground as science. It can build thereupon its edifice of truth as securely as science builds on its first principles. 'Science and religion are on equal footing. Both must begin by accepting what they cannot prove' (J. H. Morrison, *Christian Faith and the Science of To-day*, 201).

This, however, is too facile an apologetic. For the premisses of science, to which Revelation is compared, while they clearly are incapable of proof,

yet they are precisely those which unsophisticated people do not naturally call in question. There is about them a palpability or a congruity with experience and the ordinary demands of thought that causes most of us to acquiesce in them without conscious strain; they are logically necessary not only to the integrity of thought but to its possibility. But about the axiom, if we may so speak, of Divine Revelation, this cannot in the same sense be said. This axiom or principle seems to take us beyond the concatenations that make up our normal or actual life. Hence there is in the act of believing in Revelation in this form a fortuitousness that does not pertain to acceptance of the assumptions of science. Making Revelation an intellectual datum akin to the principles of science requires, in those who affirm Revelation, too arbitrary an expression of the will to believe. Finally on this point, there is the effect of this way of defending Revelation on religion itself; the methodological parallelism between religion and science on which this defence rests leads to an intellectualizing of religion or to making it secondary to science just as truly as when the conclusions of science are relied upon to prove the truth of religion.

Hence it is not thus that we can construct an epistemology of Revelation; that we can define, in other words, the nature of our knowledge of God. We need another approach; which, however, is not far to seek once we pause to think simply of what after all Revelation is. The content of Revelation is not primarily intellectual or ideational. 'What is offered to man's apprehension,' says Archbishop Temple, 'in any specific Revelation is not truth concerning God but the living God Himself' (*Nature, Man and God*, 322). Or as it is put by Barth: 'the Word of God is not a thing, but the living, personal and free God' (*op. cit.*, 230). Sayings such as these place the knowledge that comes through Revelation in a world apart. It is not a hypothesis that we may test as we test those of science; it belongs to another dimension or depth of life. It is an activity, at the existential point of our being, of God Himself whereby He removes barriers and creates the faith by which He Himself is known. 'Men can know the Word of God,' Barth says further, 'because and so far as over against the will of God there is only the weakness of disobedience, and because and so far as there is a revelation of the will of God in His Word, in which this weakness of disobedience is removed' (*ib.*, 224). This knowledge of God is not through man's seeking or learning, but it is God's own act by which man's will toward God



is changed. The possibility of knowledge of God is one with the possibility of obedience to God, and becomes actual when God establishes obedience.

Revelation, in other words, is not a supernatural vouchsafing of information about God to supplement what we could acquire ourselves, and to quench our natural curiosity concerning the fact of God. Rather is it God—whom it is not given to us to know at all as the rational philosopher conceives knowledge—claiming us as His own; it is not an interesting enlargement of our stock of ideas, but a divine event at the heart of our being. On our side it is the event of faith in which we are not now at last encompassing the ultimate in our intellectual survey of the universe; but are making a decision or taking a decision or taking sides at the point where ways irrevocably diverge. Thus the truth of Revelation is not at first present without us, to be rejected or received; only as it is received does it occur, only as there is possession of it is it perceived as true. Knowledge of God through Revelation is 'of God' in the dual sense of His being its creator as well as its object; the substance of the knowledge is one with the cause and manner of knowing. It is not knowledge which a man may have, yet esteem of no value; it is in its value being experienced that it has its being as knowledge. To know God is life eternal, said Jesus; it is not that we know God first and then have life if we act wisely upon the knowledge. Thus is knowledge of God of its own order; it does not rise and fall with the changing word of science. 'Religion,' even Bertrand Russell says, 'so long as it is content to avoid assertions which science can disprove, may survive undis-

turbed in the most scientific age' (*Religion and Science*, 5).

It is by this sign that we can conquer the religious uncertainty of our time mentioned in our first paragraph. Too often when meeting the opponent of the theistic claim we let him choose the ground, and adduce arguments for belief in the terms of speculative thought. But in doing this we shift the issue and the thing we are concerned about is not settled whether we win the debate or not. The real defence of belief in God consists in the fact that people exist who know God, and can witness to the knowledge; and to this defence speculative or scientific argument can add nothing, neither can it take away. Science in our time has marvellously revealed the structure and the sub-structure of the world; but it cannot explain the meaning and purpose of the world, nor does it disclose whether there is or is not a sovereign will and divine heart of love overruling events. For this we have only God's own Word; and we are assured of this not through finding intellectual solutions of religious doubt but in the spiritual knowledge which is God's gift and is given freely in the measure in which men renounce their self-will and choose His obedience. Hence if we would assist to bring to pass the recovery of that conviction concerning God which the world has, as we said at the first, so widely lost, we must consider our ways and so prepare men's thought and will that our day may be a Day of the Lord in which His miracle is performed as in ancient times. It is thus alone, and not through what we do to allay unbelief of our own wisdom and skill, that men will again become triumphantly sure of the Reality of God.

## The Righteousness of God.

By PRINCIPAL W. F. LOFTHOUSE, D.D., HANDSWORTH COLLEGE, BIRMINGHAM.

IN the previous paper, on 'The Righteousness of Jahveh,' we were led to the conclusion that righteousness, in the Old Testament, is, properly speaking, neither purely juridical nor purely ethical; it has to do with the personal relations of men to one another in a community; it means standing right with others, being in the right with them. When it is referred to the sphere of religion—and this, for the writers of the Old Testament, is all-important—it must be understood in the light of the covenant

in which God has chosen that He and His people should stand with one another. He is righteous when He keeps this covenant, as He always does and must do; they are unrighteous when they turn away from the personal relation of obedience and trust and reverence towards Him which the covenant demands; and then His righteousness is seen in a new light; it is His to bring them back, to restore them to the joy of the covenant state which they have wantonly flung aside, but which He will never



forget or dishonour. What is righteousness in Him becomes salvation for them ; and they once more are righteous.

Such is the profound and daring conviction that animates the noblest passages of Second Isaiah, and is seen at its highest when the righteous servant of Jahveh, submitting to a death of dishonour and shame to release Jahveh's people from the load of their self-chosen alienation and sin, ' makes many righteous.' This insight, doubtless, could only be granted to a few ; but throughout the Old Testament righteousness always can be felt to imply the rightness of personal relations. Jahveh does not want the slavish or perfunctory obedience of his people ; he wants their heart.

But as we approach New Testament times, we are conscious of a change of atmosphere. The emphasis is laid once more on obedience to the law. The law, as we have seen, is not the statute law of our modern secular communities. It is Jahveh's instruction to his people to show them what is implied by living on right terms with him, and how, if these terms have been involuntarily transgressed, they can be restored ; the means to the end. But it was easy, as it always is, to mistake means for end, and to suppose that if only the actual precepts, ceremonial and moral, could be obeyed, that would be enough by itself to secure Jahveh's favour and their own happiness. This was not indeed to surrender to mere mercenariness in religion. It was not a matter of trading with heaven ; so much good conduct, so many head of sacrificed cattle, to be repaid with so much prosperity or inward peace. Jewish piety at its best was far too real and warm a thing to be corrupted into such a bargain ; the good Jew took a real delight in carrying out what the law ordained. But it had to be carried out. The righteousness of man was the discharge of his obligation ; the righteousness of God was the granting to him of the reward for doing so (see Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 19). If a day came in which not a single command of the law were broken, all Israel would be saved. Hence, what care would be needed to see that the commands were properly guarded ! A fence must be set round them. Ambiguous as many of them were, and certainly wanting in precision, the needed definitions and amplifications had to be added, until the actual rules as given in the Pentateuch were overlaid by a mass of Rabbinic or Pharisaic ' edicts' held to be equally binding. To be righteous was to obey them all. Not that the kindly spirit of true righteousness was wholly lost. Indeed, such was the emphasis laid on it, as it was now understood, that the old word for righteousness was restricted to the meaning of almsgiving, and a new

word, *zechuth*, was used for obedience to the law.

This brings us to the Gospels, or rather to the First Gospel, for the word does not occur in any of the sayings of Jesus quoted in the Second and Third, while in the Fourth it is met with only in connexion with the judgment of the Paraclete on the world (Jn 16<sup>8-10</sup>). Nor is the term used more than seldom in the First. Jesus, at His baptism, finds it fitting to fulfil all righteousness ; He blesses those who hunger for righteousness and who are persecuted on its account ; and He says that John the Baptist came to Israel on the path of righteousness. All this by itself does not tell us much. But we also read ' except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees . . . ' and ' seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness ' (Mt 5<sup>20</sup> 6<sup>33</sup>).<sup>1</sup>

The scribes' righteousness ; your righteousness ; God's righteousness. Clearly, all three are different ; what is the relation between them ? The scribes' righteousness is not in doubt. It is the attitude whose growth we have just watched, concentration on the act, neglect of the spirit ; tithing mint and cummin ; refusing to allow a cure on the Sabbath ; cheating their own parents with their doctrine of Corban ; cleaning the outside of the cup, while within—! Jesus had no patience with such righteousness ; perhaps all the less because of the height from which it had fallen.

What then of ' your righteousness ' ? How is it to exceed that of the scribes ? Are the disciples to outdo even the scribes in their meticulous care, giving tithes, keeping the Sabbath, washing dishes—and forgetting the poor ? Impossible ; though it has been suggested that Jesus meant that they must carry their righteousness beyond the written law further than the scribes had done. But that would make them worse than the scribes. The difference is not to be one of degree, but of kind ; not *ἄλλο* but *ἕτερον* (Gal 1<sup>6</sup>). And to the type of conduct which it demands a large part of the Sermon on the Mount is devoted. Whether the familiar precepts are intended to be carried out literally or not (giving to all and sundry, yielding to the aggressor, forgiving debts, never taking an oath, disallowing divorce and so on), two things are clear about them. The principle on which they all rest is ' give, never counting

<sup>1</sup> The words ' of God ' are omitted from ' kingdom ' in N B k Matthew prefers ' kingdom of heaven.' And in view of the phrase immediately preceding, ' your Father which is in heaven,' the omission adds to the smoothness of the verse, as well as providing an explicit reminder that both kingdom and righteousness belong to the Father.



the cost to yourself'; and while they could never be carried out in civil society without disaster, they are perfectly appropriate to a society which is permeated by the spirit of the family.<sup>1</sup> For the family is built on a system of mutual rights and duties, where the welfare of each is, or should be, the concern of all; where demands are cheerfully met; and where, if one member falls below the level of such conduct, he must be restored by being treated as if he were what he is meant to be, till he is back again (Gal 6<sup>1</sup>).

We thus return to the old meaning of righteousness, right personal relations, issuing in appropriate conduct. What then of the third kind, God's righteousness? Jesus does not use the phrase elsewhere, and, as we have noticed, the actual reading is doubtful here; but we need be in no doubt as to its meaning. It is coupled with God's kingdom, or, to use the form commoner in Matthew, the Kingdom of heaven. We may be allowed here to pass by the intricate discussions as to the exact meaning the phrase was intended to convey on the lips of Jesus. What is clear from every page of the Gospel is that it was ruled over by one whom Jesus never calls King but always Father. The society which is ruled over by a father is a family; and the sovereignty of God, God's heavenly rule, is the rule of a father, recognized and obeyed by those who are received as His children. It is this which is to be sought for and to be given. God's righteousness and the righteousness of the disciples approach. They imply one another. They are two aspects of the same relation. But they are poles apart from the righteousness of the scribes.

Now at last we can advance to St. Paul; and how different (so we have often been assured) the atmosphere which now we enter. St. Paul uses *δικαιοσύνη* and its cognates, *δίκαιος* and *δικαίω*, about as often as they are used in the whole of the rest of the New Testament writings. And it has always been common to explain his use of the terms as 'forensic.' For instance, Burton, *Galatians*, 468 ff., '*δίκαιος* in the New Testament is clearly a moral-forensic term, meaning in general conforming to the true standard, meeting the ethical requirements under which one is placed. . . . With a stronger emphasis upon the forensic element, *δίκαιος* sometimes approaches or even reaches the sense, acceptance with God.' According to Schrenk, in Kittel's *Theological Dictionary*, ii. 207, righteousness is attributed forensically to the believer, or the verdict of God accomplishes the believer's righteousness. But he hastens to add that 'the forensic is only a metaphor for being right

before God; to proceed further in juristic logic is not permissible.' It would have been fortunate if this caution had always been observed. Forensic must mean what is appropriate in some way to the usage and purpose of the law-court. The sinner stands—such is the usual exposition in general terms—before God, the judge, caught as it were *in flagrante delicto*. The judge can only pronounce one sentence, of condemnation; else he would himself be dishonest, making light of crime. But God is loath to do this. Christ intervenes, Christ who shed His blood for the sinner on Calvary. Hence the just sentence can be justly intermitted. For the sake of Christ, God can pronounce (or make?) the condemned man innocent—in order that (as St. Paul adds in Ro 3<sup>26</sup>) he may be 'just (righteous), and the justifier of him that is by faith in Christ.'

This type of exposition is so familiar and the associations in our own minds of the Greek word *δίκη* with the law-courts so close, that we rarely notice the difficulties, nor observe how much there is in the picture which is not at all in harmony with the practice of the law-courts. We take it for granted that here at last we are to think of God not as a father but as a judge. But in the first place, whether to 'justify' means to pronounce innocent or to make innocent, how can an honest judge do the first with the criminal before him, and how can any judge do the second? Next, the judge as such has only to administer the law, to pass sentence; his virtue is to be cold and impartial; but when did St. Paul think of God in this way? Next, the law-court looks only on the past: God is always looking to the future. The court stands for the sentence: God brings forth His own divine purpose of reconciliation. Next, is honesty or justice on the bench, understood as unwillingness to let crime go unpunished, such a resplendent virtue? Was it something that God needed specially to reveal as being part of His character? It is certainly revealed with striking clearness throughout the Old Testament. Surely it is rather one of those requisites for virtue whose absence we should blame but whose presence we should wish to take for granted. Lastly, all St. Paul's habits of thought lead us to look for the meaning he attaches to righteousness in the Old Testament rather than in the forensic world of Greece and Rome.<sup>2</sup> Johannes Weiss comments: 'God's justice as punitive might well be attacked if He forgave sinners without any penalty' (what then of Jn 8<sup>11</sup> ?); but he goes on later, 'justification is for Paul not merely a juridical act; it bestows on men the essential gift out of God's own being.' So E. von

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the brief but valuable treatment of the question by A. D. Lindsay, *The Moral Teaching of Jesus* (1937).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dodd, *Romans*, 50; also Haering, *Δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ in Paul* (1896), 42 ff.



Dobschütz (*Th. St. Kr.*, 1912): justification is spoken of as a divine forensic judgment, when there is no outstanding debt in the celestial account books; but this would be false if it meant that the sinner were simply announced as righteous; righteousness is for St. Paul 'the expression of a religious relation.' Or, to quote Mundle, *Paul's Conception of Faith* (1932), 'the judgment of God brings to light what is now for faith a fact.'

Having said so much, let us now turn to the classical passage, Ro 3<sup>19-31</sup>, noting also Ro 1<sup>17</sup> and 10<sup>3ff.</sup> Here, one thing immediately becomes plain, the contrast between the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of God. We are reminded at once of the contrast Jesus drew between the righteousness of the scribes and the righteousness of the disciples. St. Paul was a Pharisee; he was however a very different sort of Pharisee from those on whom Jesus emptied the vials of His scorn. To them the law was the ceremonial law. They obeyed it, while they neglected the really important precepts of the moral law. Hence, their obedience was valueless. St. Paul has in mind the moral law; the example he takes is 'thou shalt not covet' (Ro 7<sup>7</sup>; cf. 13<sup>9</sup>), which is at the opposite extreme from both the ritual and the forensic or statutory. This law he acknowledges as permanently valid; but it has two fatal drawbacks; it rouses in him the actual sinful desires whose satisfaction it exists to forbid; and it can never be obeyed. We may recall Kant's recognition that the categorical imperative could never be fully carried out by man, or the happiness gained which would follow from perfect obedience; hence, the necessity for the belief (the hypothesis?) in God, who could secure the accomplishment in man of what man could never accomplish for himself. But in St. Paul this impossibility bred not a mild hope but a tragic despair.

The law demands actions, 'works'; and these actions are beyond the range of our human powers. Hence, no human being can be put in the right before God by virtue of actions, however good, whether he has learnt of them from the Jewish Torah or his own Gentile conscience (Ro 2<sup>11ff.</sup>). But observe, there is another kind of righteousness, the righteousness of God, which pays no consideration to moral acts. It is not cultivated or achieved; it is manifested, revealed, in Christ (Ro 3<sup>21. 26</sup>). St. Paul leaves his readers in no doubt as to the opposition between the two. It is God's righteousness which is revealed in the gospel, 'from faith to faith' (Ro 1<sup>17</sup>); the Jews did not know God's righteousness but sought to 'establish' their own (Ro 10<sup>3</sup>); while St. Paul repudiates any righteousness of his own, which is 'out of law,' aiming only at the righteousness which

is 'out of God,' and rests on faith (Ph 3<sup>9</sup>). The meaning of the righteousness of law has already become clear. It is not moral conduct; one does not establish one's moral conduct. It is the position of being in the right with God, winning His approval, by means of obedience to a moral code. That is, as we have seen, for St. Paul, an impossibility. It is not of course impossible to be moral. St. Paul could face the test of morality better than any one (Ph 3<sup>4</sup>). But it is impossible to commend ourselves to God by morality, because we cannot reach the standard of complete morality—there is always the sinful desire, resident in the 'flesh' (Ro 7<sup>18. 25 8<sup>5. 8</sup></sup>); and because, while we concentrate on our conduct and what it is to gain for us, we are not worshipping God but thinking of ourselves.

We should thus be reduced to despair, if it were not for this new kind of righteousness, God's, exhibited before our eyes. What then is the precise meaning of this term? Is 'of God,' for instance, subjective or objective genitive? Is this righteousness possessed by God, or is it an ideal of righteousness inspired by God in us and carried out by us? Many authorities regard the term as used now in one sense and now in the other; Haering (*Δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ in Paul*) gives indeed a list of fifteen different meanings that have been suggested for the term, and remarks with a smile that as St. Paul gives no explanation himself, he must have puzzled his readers. Haering is himself clear that the genitive is subjective or possessive; and most authorities are now in agreement with him, as, for example, Schrenk (*op. cit.*) 'the righteousness of God is exclusively God's, and man is taken up into it.' What then is this righteousness of God? We have already seen the difficulty of attributing to God our human moral excellences—chastity, truthfulness, and the like. Is it then 'forensic' in the sense that He will 'by no means clear the guilty'? Sin is so terrible that God could not let it go unpunished. Sin is indeed terrible; no reader of the first two chapters of Romans could be left in any doubt as to the author's conviction on this point. But by no sort of reasoning can this punitive sense be elicited from our passage, where the whole contention is that God does not choose to punish man, but to deliver him.<sup>1</sup> No, it is replied; God does not punish man; yet sin cannot go unpunished. Hence, God inflicts the penalty on Christ; He reveals His righteousness in providing that Christ should suffer. Thus, He may still be righteous though man is delivered. But this ruins

<sup>1</sup> The one cognate in the passage (Ro 3<sup>10ff.</sup>) that seems clearly to support the law-court metaphor is *διδόικος* (v. 10); but it is used of a world where the righteousness of God has not yet been revealed.



the antithesis between the two kinds of righteousness, the righteousness of God being nothing more than that of the judge who has to administer the law; it makes nothing of the stress laid on faith (Ro 3<sup>22, 25, 26</sup>), which is thus no more than the acceptance of the fact of Christ's vicarious suffering; and it leaves the position of those who are thus 'justified' purely negative.

The truth is that if we would understand the righteousness of God, we must remember that it is opposed, not only on the one side to man's righteousness, but also on the other to man's sin. Sin to St. Paul is much more than evil conduct as opposed to good; disobedience to this or that article in the moral code. It is more than a series of sinful acts. It is a condition, a state, in which a man may continue till he reaps its wages in death (Ro 6<sup>23</sup>; cf. Ro 2<sup>12</sup>); it entered into the world, where it exercises an unholy tyranny, and 'abounds' (Ro 5<sup>12, 20, 21</sup>). It keeps man in alienation from God, like the prodigal in the far country; it is his ruin (cf. Lk 15<sup>32</sup>), and by himself he cannot escape from it, no matter what he does (Ro 7<sup>24, 8</sup>). God's righteousness is the opposite of this alienation, and brings it to an end. Moreover, this righteousness 'has witness borne to it by the law and the prophets' (Ro 3<sup>21</sup>). Whether Second Isaiah was actually in St. Paul's mind as he wrote these words or not, he cannot have been uninfluenced by Isaiah's use of the word; note for instance the striking echo of Is 50<sup>8</sup> in Ro 8<sup>33</sup>. (so Haering, *op cit.*, 42, where he works out the double character of Jahveh's righteousness, enduring for ever, and bestowed on men, Is 51<sup>8</sup> 50<sup>8</sup> 46<sup>13</sup> 51<sup>6</sup> 62<sup>1</sup>). If man's righteousness is the state of being approved or standing in the right with Jahveh, Jahveh's righteousness is the attitude which will have man in this state, or, if he has lost it, will bring him back. The picture of the Servant is the culmination of the way in which Jahveh reveals his righteousness through these matchless chapters. Now turn to St. Paul. Here, too, God reveals His righteousness; His purpose is to fulfil it through redemption. It is to put man in the right relation to Himself. It is through Christ that men are 'made righteous' (Ro 5<sup>24</sup>; cf. Is 53<sup>12</sup>).<sup>1</sup> And this is a free gift. Or, to quote Schrenk again: 'only the just man can have genuine communion with God; but it is on no act of his own that this communion will rest, but on God's sovereign and gracious arrangement for mankind' (so Dodd, *Romans*, 56). Later on St. Paul makes this still clearer; he explains, as Kölbing

(*Th. St. Kr.*, 1895) reminded us that we must do, Ro 3 by Ro 5. We are drawn by Christ into a new personal relation to God, as of a son to his father (8<sup>15</sup>). Here St. Paul definitely links his gospel to Lk 15, the son returning from the foreign land to his father's house, and received with joy. The alienation is brought to an end: we are free. It is only a step farther—though what a daring one!—to the Johannine teaching of the abiding relation between the Son and the Father, into which believers in the Son are themselves to enter (Jn 17<sup>21</sup>).

Such was St. Paul's great discovery, if discovery it can be called when he had read it so long before in his Isaiah, though doubtless without realizing its significance then. There is only one genuine righteousness—God's. It has nothing to do with the courts; and nothing to do with what we think of as moral conduct. It is fidelity to the covenant, to that close relation in which God and man are to stand to one another; seen in its perfect form, as the Fourth Gospel would remind us, in Christ's union with the Father. This fidelity is man's righteousness also; but when it is lost in man, it shoots forth afresh in God, so to speak, so that it can find itself once more in man. As Otto Zänker has put it (*Zeitschrift für Theol.*, 1931): 'God takes us into His δικαιοσύνη, makes us δίκαιοι, in surrounding us with His δικαιοσύνη and revealing Himself to us as the δίκαιος.' This is really to paraphrase Ro 3<sup>26</sup>. What martyrdom itself could not accomplish for us without the spirit of this relation (1 Co 13<sup>3</sup>) will now naturally follow. The spirit of sonship will inevitably bear its fruit (Gal 5<sup>22</sup>; cf. Ph 2<sup>14ff.</sup>). And when later on St. Paul speaks of those who have been transferred to the Kingdom of the Son of His love, we are not far from the righteousness which was to transcend that of the scribes, but which belonged to the little flock to whom it was the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Among the most useful of the monographs on Ro 3<sup>21-26</sup> is *Der Paulinische Grundbegriff der δικαιοσύνη Θεού*, by Dr. G. A. Frick (Leipzig, 1888, 75 pp.). Frick protests against the idea, dominant in his time and long afterwards, that there can be any opposition between justice and love in God; 'justice is an element and a necessary element in love.' He finds three kinds of δικαιοσύνη in Paul; an ethical property of God; something belonging to men, but communicated by God as an act of grace; and, through faith, an ethical possession of man. The righteousness of God is, he allows, forensic; but it is not *propria* or *infusa*. Christ's life, suffering, and death, become ours through faith. Thus what is vicarious in Him becomes our 'eigenleben'; man's separation from God is done away; 'das Jenseit ist zum Diesseit geworden, für die Zeit und für die Ewigkeit.'

<sup>1</sup> Hence, the importance of faith—taking God at His word that He does regard us as reconciled to Him, placed on right terms with Him, through Christ.



## Literature.

### TOWARDS CHRISTIANITY.

MR. KENNETH INGRAM has given us another thought-provoking book in *Towards Christianity* (S.C.M.; 5s. net). It follows out the main argument of his earlier '*Christianity, Right or Left?*' but is of special interest in that it has in view more recent happenings in Europe, and still more in that it gives us an all too brief account of the author's personal spiritual pilgrimage. That is specially in point because of Mr. Ingram's conviction that only by 'sharing' can the true friends of religion make any advance.

His conviction is firm that we are living through a time of 'revolution,' in which a new civilization is coming painfully to the birth. One similar revolution took place when Christianity emerged from the swathing-bands of Judaism; another in the Reformation of the sixteenth century. In our time over against the civilization whose key-word is Capitalism is emerging another in which class distinctions are valueless and extremes of material wealth or poverty will disappear—call it Socialism or Communism or what you will, there is no denying the fact. Fascism, as he pointed out before, is the last defence mechanism of Capitalism.

Now Mr. Ingram's purpose is to argue that religion, organized in churches with their essential features—creeds, dogmatics, rituals—has always tended to be on the conservative, even the reactionary, side, and if religion is to be saved the churches must align themselves with the new order, otherwise they are likely to be doomed. Mr. Ingram, indeed, is quite sure that religion will survive, but if the churches are not awake to realities, religion will be found to be outside them, and indeed opposed to them. That this is already happening even in our own country, he sees evidence. Apart from some exceptional individual cases, he knows, the churches are not commanding any attention save amid a small minority of the population. We must get back to vital Christianity which is essentially an intention, and action appropriate thereto, to make of mankind a community. Christians must be keenly alive to the fact of the situation which confronts them—no overdone other-worldiness, no mere upholding of old banners, will serve. We must learn to distinguish between the Truth and views as to the Truth. Truth no doubt is permanent and unchanging, but how little have we

except views of the Truth which are constantly changing.

We wish for this book a wide circulation. It is simple in style, thought new and then Mr. Ingram uses to help of eloquence, and if it is not always convincing it is always better than that in being suggestive and challenging. What could be better put than this—'We do not meet Christ if we seek Him in a distant Pastorate or in the pleasant glades of idealized recollections. If He is alive to us, we shall find Him in the world of the present, in the streets, in the market-place, in the arena of our own struggle, in the friendships and the loves which are the substance of our lives.'

### THE PURITANS.

There has appeared in the American Literature series an elaborate work entitled *The Puritans* (Allen & Unwin; 10s. net), edited by Mr. Perry Miller of Harvard University and Mr. Thomas H. Johnston of Lawrenceville School. The aim of the work has been to portray the Puritans who settled New England and those of the next two generations who lived there. That is to say, the editors are mainly concerned with what might be called the 'pure' Puritanism of the seventeenth century.

The selections from Puritan writers have been grouped into chapters dealing respectively with History, the Theory of the State and of Society, the World and the Next, Manners, Customs and Behaviour (spelled Behavior), Biography and Letters, Poetry, Literary Theory, Education, Science. It seemed best to the editors to let the Puritans speak for themselves as much as possible, 'for they were not a reticent people, nor were they wanting in ideas.'

There is a General Introduction in which it is sought to view Puritanism as a whole: 'to meet its boundaries, fix its location, supply guides to its monuments, and establish that unity which so clearly runs in Puritan thought, expression, and manners.' There are Notes to the texts which are cited, and the work is also supplied with satisfying Bibliographies and a useful Index.

When this is said, one is inclined to stop. Because an attempt to give anything like a concrete impression of such a work would take up much more space than could be allowed. One might, however, remark on the value and appositeness of the intro-



ductions to the various chapters and on the commendable compactness of the biographical and other notices preceding the texts. One might also touch on the following point of special interest to readers of this magazine.

The editors of the book remind us that seventeenth-century Puritanism has been subject to much misconception. For example, it has been identified with evangelicalism in many accounts, even with the evangelicalism of the 'camp meeting' and the 'revivalist orgy.' But during the seventeenth century Puritanism was a fairly rigid orthodoxy. By the middle of the eighteenth century, however, there had proceeded from it two distinct and opposed schools of thought. 'Certain elements were carried into the creeds and practices of the evangelical religious revivals, but others were perpetuated by the rationalists and the forerunners of Unitarianism.' And in each case there was a departure from authentic Puritanism. The founding fathers would have repudiated both Methodism and Unitarianism. Truly, it is dangerous to read history backwards, to interpret something that was by what it became, particularly if it became more than one thing.

#### THE PRICE OF LEADERSHIP.

*The Price of Leadership*, by Mr. J. Middleton Murry (S.C.M.; 5s. net), is based on lectures delivered at various places, and the author was persuaded by Dr. J. H. Oldham to expand them to their present form—to the great profit of the reader. The book is written with passionate earnestness, and conveys a deeply Christian message. The writer is convinced that Christianity is the only realism which does not lead to despair, that Western civilization is Christian in its basic conditions without knowing it and without caring even to know, and that the recovery of this knowledge and the bringing of it again into clear consciousness is the only alternative to chaos. Much in this book is repeated, in concentrated form, from Mr. Murry's earlier book, 'Heaven—And Earth,' published about nine months ago. Again he urges vigorously that the mediæval unity of Christendom must be rediscovered. The Roman Church missed the opportunity which it had prior to the Reformation. The Reformers, and in succession to them, the Non-conformists in England, made Christianity mainly a matter of individual salvation and missed their opportunity of influencing penetratingly the body politic. Their spirit is reproduced to a certain extent in some phases of continental Protestantism

in which Christianity shows a tendency to become eschatological and mainly transcendent.

In this book the failure of Christianity to influence modern society, national and international, is analysed with special reference to education. The thesis of the writer is that the older education of the Public School type very properly kept in view the training for political life of the members of the ruling classes. Formerly these classes were drawn from amongst the well-to-do, but now they are potentially recruited from all ranks, and the State-controlled secondary education, dominated as it is by a non-Anglican tradition which was suspicious of State interference, considered culture to be a matter of subordinate importance and restricted its interest in education to preparation for commercial success, is not doing its duty towards the new ruling classes. The necessity is that education of the older type should now be made available for the whole community and not merely for privileged classes. Democracy cannot do without leaders, and must educate its leaders for political life. And Christianity must be the inspiration of this education. Democracy is impossible apart from Christianity, for by Christianity alone is respect for human personality secured, and democracy prevented from degenerating into Marxism and Totalitarianism. 'Democracy lives and can live only in so far as it strives to be Christian.' Democracy of to-day is an apostasy from the Christian faith; it depends upon the natural powers of man, and has nothing to oppose effectively to economic determinism. Man must be reborn in Christ if he is to be a true democrat, and the Church must get rid of the spirit of aloofness from political life. The national community must again become a part of a purified and broadened Christian Church. The emphasis of Christian faith must be placed not upon profound definitions of the Divine nature, but upon a continued experience of the nature that is to be defined. The powerfully stated belief of the writer of this book is that 'in Jesus is manifest the nature of the thought that created and sustains the universe,' and that 'it is on the calling of the wise to the simplicity of Christ that the possibility of a Christian civilization depends.'

#### THE QUR'ÂN.

Dr. Richard Bell is to be congratulated on the publication of Volume II. of *The Qur'ân, translated with a Critical Re-arrangement of the Surahs* (T. & T. Clark; 12s. 6d. net). The first volume, which was reviewed in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES of April 1938,



contains the first twenty-four surahs, and the second completes the Qur'ān. Each surah is preceded by brief notes on its contents and the dates of the various passages, and brief headings are inserted throughout the surahs to indicate the subject-matter.

This work will be welcomed both by students of the Qur'ān and by the general reader. To the former, Dr. Bell has opened up a new field of research, and, to the latter, he has made the Qur'ān more intelligible than it has hitherto been. Although the work is based on exact and brilliant scholarship, this is not paraded, and so the general reader can use this translation without being distracted by an elaborate system of notes. The brief notes at the beginning of surahs are a sufficient guide to what follows, and the passage headings are a great help to understanding. Those who have felt the Qur'ān to be a dreary book may be recommended to read this translation, for it will give them a new conception of it.

Dr. Bell has applied to the Qur'ān the principles applied by Old Testament scholars to the prophetic books where, as in the Qur'ān, unrelated passages have been thrown together without any indication of the fact. But he has not followed Rodwell in arranging the surahs chronologically. The usual order has been retained, but the various elements are separated, sometimes by means of parallel columns, so that the confusion caused by the juxtaposition of unconnected passages is removed. This is wise, for a thoroughgoing chronological arrangement would involve not merely a following of Rodwell's system, but a complete re-arrangement of portions of surahs, too complicated a matter to be practicable or useful, and one which would inevitably lay itself open to the charge of being subjective.

The translation is of a high quality throughout and shows a commendable independence. While well aware of the conventional explanations of Muslim commentators, Dr. Bell has not hesitated to differ from them where he feels that the Arabic words cannot bear their interpretations. The value of the work is enhanced by a table of the main events in Muhammad's life, a note on dating which indicates some of the principles which have been followed, a list of Arabic words, etc., explained in the notes, and a subject index.

#### CUNEIFORM TEXTS.

In *The Cuneiform Texts of Ras Shamra-Ugarit*, by Mr. Claude F. A. Schaeffer (published for the British Academy by the Oxford University Press; 8s. 6d. net), we have about one hundred pages by the Director of the French Archæological Expedi-

tion, giving us a particularly interesting survey of the archæological discoveries, extending over nine successive seasons (1929-1937), made on this historic site by himself and his assistants. The chapters, which deal with the history, library, cults, and religious texts of Ugarit, contain the substance of the Schweich Lectures which he gave in January last to the British Academy, and the Rhind Lectures which he delivered three months later in Edinburgh. He has appended nearly two hundred bibliographical and explanatory notes, which afford additional information on several of the finds, and has been well served by his translators who have succeeded in preserving the simplicity and clearness of his French original.

The Ras Shamra Tablets open up a fascinating subject, but unfortunately they have been differently deciphered and interpreted by different scholars, and even yet after several years' discussion the problems they raise are in a state of flux. If any criticism may be expected of the author's views, it will be to the effect that they are too dependent perhaps on the hazardous mythological and historical speculations of Vroelaeud, Dussaud, and others, who regard the texts as concerned largely with the Negeb and Old Testament patriarchal legends. These inferences of the French School may yet prove to be correct, but there are scholars of repute who believe they may have to be modified considerably as a result of further studies and new finds. The distinguished Director, however, knows his subject, and his interpretations merit respect and general acceptance. He has avoided many of the shaky edifices built at first on dubious renderings, and confined his conclusions more or less to certainties. He is undoubtedly right in asserting that the Canaanites were familiar with writing from the middle of the second millennium—we would even put it earlier—and that the Israelite compilers made use of positive information about real events, not handed down solely through oral tradition, but preserved through centuries as written legends, of which a pattern is provided by the Ras Shamra texts. The volume, coming from the pen of such an outstanding scholar and excavator, who alone can furnish us with accurate information on many points at issue, deserves and will certainly have wide publicity among Biblical scholars, ministers, teachers, and all others interested in the Near East.

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*Your Life and the Church*, by Mr. Percy R. Hayward, is a book for boys and girls and all young



people who singly or in a group seek to discover what it means to choose the Christian way of life and join the Church. It is meant to be used either for personal reading or in a 'pastor's class.' In other words it is a book of preparation for Church membership, intended to be used by catechumens. It is an unusual book of the kind. The class is set a good deal of useful work, such as interviewing church members to find out why *they* joined the Church and what they have made of it! The individual members of the class have to make a record of their own discoveries and of their progress. The plan would seem to promise good results, and at any rate the working out of it is worth considering (Abingdon Press ; 35 c.).

This year's Swarthmore Lecture was delivered by Mr. D. Elton Trueblood, Ph.D., who chose as his subject *The Trustworthiness of Religious Experience* (Allen & Unwin ; 2s. 6d. net). It is an old and oft-discussed topic, but we bespeak a cordial welcome for a fresh treatment, valuable for its scholarly treatment and a most lucid style.

Dr. Trueblood examines whether religious knowledge exists and what are its criteria. He proceeds by demonstrating that if religious knowledge has its problems, so has knowledge of external reality ; and that criteria which are deemed valid in the latter sphere are applicable to the former. Thus millions have had religious experiences, and there is sufficient agreement among their witness. They who would lightly relegate it all 'to the limbo of subjectivism have not fully appreciated how enormous their undertaking really is.'

*The Cambridgeshire Syllabus of Religious Teaching for Schools*, revised edition, 1939 (Cambridge University Press ; 2s. 6d. net), is a really great achievement. It marks a distinct advance on the original edition, published in 1924. Religious education to-day shares with education generally the conviction that the child, not the material to be taught, should be the centre and determining factor in every educational system. And religious education, in addition, has learned that the child's first contacts with Bible truth should be through the Gospels and the life of Jesus, and that these contacts should be maintained through the early years by the same means, and not through the Old Testament. These two principles may be said to be those embodied in this great constructive programme. It has taken two years' hard work by a distinguished committee which included noted educationists, teachers, and ecclesiastics. The Syllabus is comprehensive and

elaborate, and fills us with admiration, not only for its vision but also for the courage of those who laid down such a complete plan. The introductions, notes, and explanations are helpful, and if this intelligently conceived course is followed out in practice, the happiest results may be looked for. We have only one criticism. The Bibliography at the end should be revised. It is almost incredible that the book of all others to which teachers should have access, Sir George Adam Smith's 'Historical Geography,' is not mentioned. There are other omissions that are remarkable. And there are some books recommended that are of very doubtful value. Opinions will be divided about this book or that, but the Bibliography attached to such a Syllabus as this should be one of its main features. And this one needs to be trimmed.

Both in Britain and in America there have been many recent statements, of a compendious nature, of the essence of the Christian Faith. Among the latest is *The Faith We Declare* (Cokesbury Press ; \$2.00), by Professor Edwin Lewis of Drew Theological Seminary, a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. True to his ecclesiastical antecedents the writer makes here an appeal to the Protestant churches to recover and preserve their evangelical heritage. In setting forth that heritage he fastens only upon central things, avoiding technicalities and using a style at once popular and eloquent, if tending at times to be both diffuse and rhetorical. Here are the things on which he lays the stress : 'the reality of God, the purpose of God, the love of God, the manifestation of God in Christ, the sufferings of Christ as involving God, the Resurrection as the guarantee of the triumph of God, the God of to-day as the God from whom Christ is inseparable.' Obviously a theocentric theology, and at the same time Christocentric. It is not surprising to find that Dr. Lewis criticises 'Re-thinking Missions' (published in 1932 as the Report of the Commission of Laymen) as not striking an unequivocal evangelical note. He is personally clear as to the right of Christianity to replace all other faiths, and welcomes Hendrik Kraemer's recent work, 'The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World,' as a clear pronouncement on the universalism of the Christian Faith.

*On Roman Roads with St. Paul*, by the Rev. R. Martin Pope, B.D. (Epworth Press ; 6s. net), is the work of one who in the War time made a name for himself among the soldiers as a fascinating lecturer on the ancient East, with parts of which he had



made himself personally familiar. Later, his books on early Christianity in these regions have won acceptance for their picturesque descriptions. In the present book he brings his knowledge of the topography and historic associations of the lands through which St. Paul travelled to illuminate the life and missionary work of the great Apostle. The whole makes very interesting reading and should prove valuable to the Bible student for the sidelights it throws upon the narrative of the Acts. The only criticism one would be disposed to make is that it attempts to cover too much ground, and in consequence compresses the narrative unduly. Over a score of very fine photographs add colour and vividness to the book.

A profoundly earnest book on the duty and the way of prayer has been written by Mr. Eric Abbott, Warden of the Bishop's Hostel, Lincoln—*Escape or Freedom?* (Heffer; 2s. 6d. net). The book consists of six addresses on prayer given at a Triennial Mission to Cambridge University this year. The directions given here make great demands on any one who is prepared to undertake seriously to follow them out. But this is no criticism of the speaker or of his counsel. On the contrary, any one who deals with this counsel in the right spirit will find great treasure in it. Definite instruction is given about sacramental confession, and a form of confession is suggested, in which the following words occur: 'For these and all my other sins which I cannot now remember I am sorry, I humbly ask pardon of God, and of you, His priest, penance, counsel, and absolution.' This will give the writer's standpoint, but are not the words a little unusual?

To mark the fiftieth anniversary of his gaining the Lightfoot Scholarship in Ecclesiastical History at Cambridge, Professor-Emeritus F. J. Foakes Jackson has published a collection of studies of ecclesiastical historians which he entitles *A History of Church History, Studies of Some Historians of the Christian Church* (Heffer; 7s. 6d. net). The main title is a little unfortunate. The 'History of Church History' is a real subject in which a good book is a desideratum, but this, as is carefully explained and indeed indicated in the sub-title, is not the book we desire. For all that, it is a very good book, as one expects of the author. It deals in lucid and illuminating fashion with the origin and developments of ecclesiastical history, the origin and growth of the New Testament Canon, the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus, Philo, Eusebius of Cæsarea and his predecessors, Greek historians after Eusebius, St. Augustine's philosophy of history, Gregory of

Tours, Adamnan's Life of Columba, Bede, Anna Comnena, Burnet, Gibbon, and finally the books recommended by Lightfoot.

Not only students of Church History but a wide public will value these essays.

A book of services for the observance of the Lord's Supper has been compiled by Mr. Pitt Bonarjee—*The Office of the Holy Communion, with Eight Orders of Service* (Independent Press; 1s. net). They are simple and beautiful. The prayers are all short, and in one service there is a homily. The sources are not indicated. These orders of service are meant as suggestions as to the method by which the Holy Supper may be celebrated with due reverence, and they will be helpful for this end.

Not long ago we reviewed an expository study of the first eight chapters of the Acts of the Apostles by Professor Halford E. Luccock of Yale University. This has now been followed by a companion volume on the rest of the book—*The Acts of the Apostles in Present-Day Preaching* (McCallum & Co.; 6s. net). These two books are *sui generis*. They are not commentaries or sermons. The author himself calls them 'Notebooks on the Acts.' They are material for sermons, and they are very 'modern.' Passage by passage the author goes through Acts, seizing on suggestive topics and relating them to life to-day. Here are some of the titles: New Eyes for Old, Learning from Outsiders, We are the People, Let's Kill a Few People, Living by Slogans. The book suggests religious journalism and a lot of other things. But it really does suggest. Seeds for sermons are sown richly all over it. And the brief homilies are not only up-to-date, but are constantly illustrated by quotations from literature that brighten up the point.

A book of extraordinary interest, that supplies much more than its title promises, is *Pioneers of Religious Education*, by Mr. T. F. Kinloch (Milford; 3s. 6d. net). The author's idea is to let us see the masters at work so that we may learn in turn how to tackle our own task. Christian education begins with Christian Humanism, and the book therefore begins with a chapter on Erasmus and Colet. Then we have the Jesuits, Comenius, Pietism, Pestalozzi, Schleiermacher, and Arnold of Rugby. With mastery of his material the author packs into his small space an amazing amount of information. But, able and suggestive as these chapters are, many will value as much the reflections in his closing chapter, in which we find wisdom enough to make us wish he would give us a full-size con-



structive book on religious education itself. Mr. Kinloch is both learned and broad-minded, but he is perfectly definite on the main point—that for the purpose of religious education Christ must be to us not a teacher only but a Redeemer, and the crucial question is: ‘Can the school as a school set Him forth in this light?’

Canon Peter Green is persuaded that there is nothing from which religion in England to-day has suffered, and is suffering, more than from the neglect of Bible-reading in the home and efficient Bible-teaching in the school. Accordingly, he consented to contribute to the series of Biblical Handbooks edited by Bishop Blunt a volume on *The Devotional Use of the Bible* (S.P.C.K.; paper covers 1s., cloth boards 1s. 9d.). In this volume, which is full of concrete instance, the writer considers why we should read the Bible, what the Bible is, and how to read the Bible historically. He then considers more particularly the devotional use and study of the Bible, ending with the consideration of its literary use. We commend the volume with every confidence to teachers and preachers.

The Rev. Hubert S. Box, B.D., Ph.D., has written *An Introduction to the Ignatian Exercises* (S.P.C.K.; 3s. 6d. net). The ‘Spiritual Exercises’ of St. Ignatius is said in the Foreword (by Bishop Lumsden Barkway) to be the classical guide for conductors of Retreats, whether private or public; and Mr. Box explains in the Preface that his book is intended to be, not a substitute for, but a stepping-stone to, such fuller Commentaries as those of Fathers Langridge, Rickaby, and Ambrozzi. He also explains that he has not attempted to expurgate or Anglicize the ‘Spiritual Exercises’ in any way; his aim has been to present St. Ignatius’ teaching exactly as it stands. But the style of the ‘Spiritual Exercises’ is so stark and severe that interpretation is needed, and Mr. Box appears to be a reliable interpreter.

If it is true that very few Christians know anything about Judaism, the Rev. A. Lukyn Williams’ book, *The Doctrines of Modern Judaism Considered* (S.P.C.K.; 5s. net), ought to arouse considerable interest. Dr. Williams does not deal with classic Judaism. He has already published a book on Talmudic Judaism. In this new volume he confines himself to the Jews of the present day. This makes his task more difficult, because to-day the Jews are sharply divided into Orthodox and Liberal, a distinction that corresponds roughly to that which exists in all churches. Orthodox Judaism, for

example, to take one instance of the wide divergence, clings to the traditional hope of a coming Messiah. Liberal Judaism has given up belief in a personal Messiah, but clings to the hope of a Messianic age. It is a kind of *Messianism* without the Messiah. Dr. Williams refers to this among other points. But his book covers a wide range and gives an intelligent account of the whole range of modern Jewish thought. It is a careful and well-documented study, and will find special acceptance at the present time.

The Jewish question is one which presses acutely on the public mind to-day, and in view of the floods of defamatory matter which are being continually poured out it is very necessary that the case for the Jews should be stated and upheld. The Soncino Jewish Publication Society has done good work in this connexion by various publications. Their latest, and perhaps the best, is *Jewish Rights and Jewish Wrongs*, by Mr. Neville Laski, K.C. (Soncino Press; 7s. 6d. net). It is, of course, frankly pro-Jewish, but it is at the same time historical, calmly reasoned, and constructive. Persecution of the Jews, which was once religious, has now become racial, and has created a state of things more intolerable than ever before. The writer gives most painful accounts of the sufferings of the Jews in Germany and Austria. Dealing with a subject about which less is known, the condition of the Jews in Poland, he describes their abject poverty. ‘I had never seen, and could hardly have imagined, such poverty, squalor, and filth. It made me despair of civilization. . . . I felt that if I had my way, there was little of the Jewish quarter in Warsaw that I would not blow up as unfit for human habitation.’ Coming to questions of policy he shows how intricate and difficult the situation is, and how certain lines of action, such as boycotting, may prove to be double-edged weapons. The chapter on Palestine is of special interest, and holds the balance very fairly between Arab and Jewish aspirations. This is a book which should be read by every one who desires to have a well-informed and balanced judgment on the Jewish problem.

Every Christian will agree that the great need of the present day is a rediscovery of Christ, and this is the burden of a little book, *The Essential Need of the Twentieth Century*, by Mr. C. V. Davies (Stockwell). It is urged with great earnestness, but it is a pity that the plea should be weakened by such a stupid remark as that the Church to-day has lost the Truth, and has smothered it ‘with her organizations, assemblies, and conferences.’

## After Fifty Years.

### VIII. The Significance of the Apostle Paul.

BY THE REVEREND SYDNEY CAVE, D.D., PRINCIPAL OF NEW COLLEGE, LONDON.

IN his interesting book, *The Apostle Paul and the Modern World*, Dr. Peabody remarked that in the Library of his Theological School in Harvard University there are 'more than two thousand volumes dealing with the life and letters of the Apostle Paul, or more than one for each year since his time, not to speak of the multitudinous commentaries and histories in which the teaching of Paul has a prominent place.' These words were written sixteen years ago. By now that section of the Library must be much increased, for many of the best books on St. Paul have appeared in recent years. Within the limits of one article it will be impossible to mention more than a few of those books on Paul which we ourselves have read. Some of the German literature is described in Schweitzer's *Paul and His Interpreters*, Eng. tr., 1912. A far fuller account is given in Feine's immense and suggestive book, *Der Apostel Paulus*, 1927. On the English literature there is, so far as we know, no book.

The English student of Paul had fifty years ago two good 'lives' of Paul to use: that by Conybeare and Howson, 1877, and that by Farrar, 1879. The first was especially rich in topographical detail; the second was written with an exuberance of style more in favour then than now, but usefully related his letters to his life. Both these books have long since been displaced by more modern books. Instead of Conybeare and Howson's book, the student would to-day turn to Sir William Ramsay's *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen*, 1895, which, in its wealth of learning, is still the best presentation of the outer events of Paul's life; instead of Farrar's book, the modern reader would use such books as David Smith's *The Life and Letters of St. Paul*, 1919; A. H. McNeile's *St. Paul, His Life, Letters and Christian Doctrine*, 1920; C. T. Woods' *Life, Letters and Religion of St. Paul*, 1925; or more popularly written books such as Weinell's, *St. Paul, the Man and His Work*, Eng. tr., 1906; or T. R. Glover's *Paul of Tarsus*, 1925.

Lightfoot's *Commentaries on Galatians, Philipians, and Colossians* were first published respectively in 1865, 1868, and 1875, but fifty years ago they were still of unrivalled authority. The

writer of this article gratefully remembers how it was the study of these commentaries in the Greek Testament class at school which first (though much less than fifty years ago!) made Paul intelligible and so fascinating. In the study of Paul's theology the student was far less fortunate. There was Pfleiderer's *Paulinism*, 1877, and Bernard Weiss's *Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, Eng. tr., 1882 and 1883. Pfleiderer rejected, Weiss accepted, what was held to be the Pauline theology; but, although these books thus differed much, they were alike in treating Paul as primarily a systematic theologian. These books were learned and instructive, but they dissected Paul's theology; they did not show it as the living expression of his religion. H. J. Holtzmann's *Lehrbuch der neutestamentlichen Theologie*, 1897, had that same lack. All that learning can provide is given, and yet Paul's theology does not live. As we remember these elaborate reconstructions of Paul's thought, we can sympathize with Deissmann's words: 'I am afraid the people of Iconium, Thessalonica, Corinth would all have been overtaken by the fate of Eutychus of Troas, if they had been obliged to listen to the Christological, hamartiological, and eschatological paragraphs of modern "Paulinism."'

Far more vivid were Sabatier's *The Apostle Paul*, Eng. tr., 1891, and A. B. Bruce's *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, 1896. It is possible that Sabatier over-emphasizes the development of Paul's thought in his Christian period, but his book, which is written with admirable lucidity, is still of value. Even more attractive is A. B. Bruce's book. It needs to be supplemented by the discoveries of more recent scholars, but it ought still to be on every preacher's shelves. Equally successful in relating Paul's theology to his religion was Titius's *Der Paulinismus unter dem Gesichtspunkt der Seligkeit*, 1900. A good account of Paul's teaching was given in Steven's *The Theology of the New Testament*, 1901, whilst Dr. Garvie's *Studies in Paul and His Gospel*, 1911, was at once learned and suggestive.

The course of controversy brought into new prominence the origin of Paul's theology and its relation to the teaching of Jesus. Holsten in his



earlier writings and in his elaborate *Das Evangelium des Paulus*, i., 1880, ii., 1898, had sought to give a 'Genetic Presentation of the Christian Worldview of Paul' and to exhibit his theology as the product of his dialectic in its application to his conversion, and Pfleiderer and Holtzmann had likewise sought to assign Paul's theology to the immanent necessities of his logic. These attempts were seen to be inadequate. As Wrede put it in his *Paul*, 1904 (Eng. tr., 1907), 'the magnificent assurance, confidence and enthusiasm of Paul's faith would be utterly unintelligible if its foundation was a conception which he himself excogitated.' Wrede himself argued that Paul, even while still a Jew, had already a complete 'Christ-Dogmatic.' He believed in 'a celestial being, in a divine Christ, before he believed in Jesus.' Paul's conversion had thus merely this importance: 'that the human life of Jesus, with its culmination in death and resurrection, became a part of the picture' which, as a Jew, he already had of Christ.

Wrede's book appeared in a series of popular booklets, which in Germany sold at a low price and had an immense circulation. For him Paul was primarily a theologian, whose theology was his religion. And this theology he had in substance before he believed in Jesus. His picture of Christ was thus not derived from any impression of the person of Jesus. 'What we prize in the man Jesus, His moral majesty, His purity and piety, meant for his Christology, nothing.' Thus, in Wrede's view, Christ's humanity was to Paul of little significance and was asserted only because his theology demanded that the Christ should suffer and die. As in an earlier book, *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien*, 1901, Wrede had sought to show that it was only after the disciples believed Jesus to be risen that they claimed Him as the Messiah, it is clear that, if his interpretation be right, there is no real connexion between the Christ of Paul and the Jesus of the Gospels. In the same series as Wrede's *Paul*, Bousset had written a *Jesus* which makes Him to be not the Lord of men but the gracious hero of the religious life, the first true believer in God the Father. The publication of Bousset's *Jesus* and Wrede's *Paul* thus raised in an acute form the problem of the relation of Paul to Jesus. If Bousset and Wrede were right, Paul was not the interpreter of Jesus but the founder of a new religion.

Wrede's book, for all its brilliance, was soon seen to be inconclusive. The Jewish Apocrypha can easily be studied; thus in English we have Charles's great edition of the *Apocrypha and*

*Pseudepigrapha*. It became clear that Wrede had unduly assimilated their teaching to that of the Christian conception of Christ. The Messiah of Jewish Apocalypse is far too dim a figure to have aroused the passionate devotion which Paul gave to Jesus Christ. Besides, as Jülicher wrote in his little book *Paulus und Jesus*, 1907, in the same series, 'An apostle of Jesus Christ, who declined to know anything of the earthly life of the Messiah, and who acted thus in order to support his own dogmatic theory, is the product of the modern mania for logical consistency. It is certainly not the Paul of history.'

One extreme leads to another. The attempt to present Paul primarily as a theologian was followed by Deissmann's vivid book, *St. Paul, A Study in Social and Religious History*, Eng. tr., 1912, which sought 'to come back from the paper St. Paul of our Western libraries, Germanized, dogmatized, modernized, to the historic St. Paul, to penetrate through the "Paulinism" of our New Testament theologies to the St. Paul of ancient reality.' St. Paul is best presented as 'essentially a hero of piety, first and foremost. . . . He is far more a man of prayer and witness, a confessor and a prophet, than a learned exegetist and brooding dogmatist.' In our country, especially, where many who prize religion dislike theology, Deissmann's presentation attracted much interest and won great popularity. In this book, as in his earlier book, *Die neutestamentliche Formel 'in Christo Jesu'*, 1892, Deissmann did good service by emphasizing the significance of Paul's sense of being 'in Christ Jesus.' But his description of Paul's Christianity as a Christ-cult was unfortunate, for it suggested that Paul worshipped Christ as pagans worship their gods, and obscured the distinctiveness of New Testament Christianity, which so finds God in Christ that the worship of Christ is one with the worship of God.

It is this distinctiveness of New Testament Christianity that is to many modern men its offence. If Paul's estimate of Christ be rejected, how is it to be explained or explained away? The attempts to explain Paul's conception of Christ by dialectic or by Jewish Christ-dogmatics had both failed. There remained a third way, which was to prove more significant and which, even in its eventual failure, has thrown much needed light on the nature of Paul's teaching—the attempt to derive Paul's proclamation of Christ from contemporary pagan myths of gods who die and rise again.

In no sphere of knowledge (unless it be in

Psychology !) is it possible to write such pretentious nonsense as in the sphere of the Comparative Study of Religion, and some of the attempts to interpret Paul's Christianity as a mystery-religion merited less attention than they received. Too many writers in assembling supposed proofs of the derivation of Paul's Christianity from pagan mystery-cults not only translated pagan ideas into Christian words but derived their evidence from many centuries and many lands. Clever amateurs like Drews and Smith in Germany and J. M. Robertson in England were thus able to reach the absurd conclusion that Jesus never lived. Even scholars like Brückner and Heitmüller showed a similar disregard of topography and chronology, and their books well deserved Schweitzer's scornful condemnation.

In England the theory won influence through Dr. Kirsopp Lake's brilliant book *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, 1911. 'Baptism,' he wrote, 'is for St. Paul and his readers universally and unquestionably accepted as a "mystery" or sacrament which works *ex opere operato*,' whilst he described the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist as 'much more nearly primitive than the Protestant.' This statement naturally pleased those who, holding the 'Catholic' view of the sacraments, desired to give to St. Paul's words a Catholic meaning. But the words which follow ought also to be quoted. 'The Catholic advocate in winning his case has proved still more : the type of doctrine which he defends is not only primitive, but pre-Christian.' And 'pre-Christian' in this context means pagan.

Dr. Lake's statement was the more impressive in that he did not assemble the evidence on which it claimed to be based. The evidence for cults and practices of the mystery-cults in Paul's age and place is singularly meagre, whilst to speak of the mythic gods of these cults as gods 'who died and rose again' is to give an unduly Christian form to pagan notions connected with these gods. The literature on this subject is immense. There is no better introduction to it than to read the three successive editions of the book which did seek to present the evidence, Reitzenstein's *Die Hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen*. The first edition of 1910 was a very short book, but claimed to provide much evidence ; the second edition of 1920 is a longer book, but the evidence adduced is less. The third edition of 1927 was a still bigger book, but in it the supposed evidence has become very slight. To give but one illustration : he reluctantly admits that the evidence he had adduced of parallels in

the mystery-cults to the Lord's Supper was irrelevant, and that it cannot be compared 'with non-Christian counterparts.'

Reitzenstein had not an attractive style, and not unnaturally many scholars who had read the first edition of his book left the later editions of it unread. In English there is an admirable discussion of the evidence in H. A. A. Kennedy's *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions*, 1913, whilst Machen's *The Origin of St. Paul's Religion*, 1921, was not only a very vigorous but a very learned attack on the attempt to explain away Paul's Christianity by reference to the mystery-cults.

The controversy brought into new prominence not only the relation of the so-called 'theology of Paul' and 'the religion of Jesus,' but also the relation of Paul's teaching to that of the Church of his age. It became clear that Paul in his essential gospel was not an innovator ; that if there was a transformation from discipleship of Jesus to the proclamation of Him as the Risen Lord, this transformation must have taken place before Paul's conversion. That is the thesis of the most important book written from the standpoint of the *religionsgeschichtliche* school, Bousset's *Kyrios Christos*, 1913, which attributes the ascription to Jesus of Lordship to the Gentile converts at Antioch. Bousset's book was severely criticised by Wernle in articles published in 1915 in the *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*. Bousset made a pained reply to Wernle's attack in his *Jesus der Herr*, 1916, but the second edition of his *Kyrios Christos*, 1921, was written with greater caution. Bousset's great book is still untranslated. Its position is reflected, though with greater restraint and discrimination, in W. Morgan's *The Religion and Theology of Paul*, 1917.

The *religionsgeschichtliche* interpretation of Paul's thought for long seemed to some a grave menace to Christian faith and to others a welcome means of reducing the scope and content of the Christian message. Among scholars there is now a very general scepticism in regard to its conclusions, but its popular influence is very great. But this interpretation, which was designed to explain away Paul's Christianity, has led to two immense advances in Pauline scholarship. It has brought about a reinvestigation of the culture and religion of Paul's age and in that way has led to a fresh knowledge of the thought-forms of his time, so that we are now able to interpret his words as those of a man of the first century. In German a very useful book is Paul Wendland's *Die Hellenistisch-Römische Kultur in ihrer Beziehungen zu Judentum und Christentum*,



1912, which forms part of Lietzmann's invaluable *Handbuch zum Neuen Testament*, the latter part of which contains commentaries rich in reference to Græco-Oriental literature. Among English books may be mentioned Halliday's *The Pagan Background of Early Christianity*, 1925, and also Dr. Annan's *The Mystery Religions and Christianity*, published also in 1925, a book the value of which would be much greater if only more dates had been given. How rich is the material available for the modern scholar can be seen from a study of the footnotes and appendices given in W. L. Knox's *St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles*, published this year, or, better still, from a study of the Pauline terms in Gerhard Kittel's great *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*.

The controversy has not only led to a greater knowledge of the Græco-Orientalism of Paul's environment, it has also brought new knowledge of the meaning of many of the terms he uses, so that his theology can now be studied in the light of the first instead of the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. One of the most illuminating accounts of Paul's thought written from this newer standpoint is to be found in Johannes Weiss's *Urchristentum*, published posthumously in 1917, an English translation of which, *The History of Primitive Christianity*, was issued in 1937. Weinelt's *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments*<sup>3</sup>, 1921, written from the 'Liberal' standpoint, and the rich and instructive book of Feine, a 'Positive' scholar, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*<sup>3</sup>, 1919, alike show how much the study of the thought-forms of Paul's age has done to illuminate the content of Paul's thought. We know now that Paul thought of Sin and Wrath and Law not abstractedly but concretely, as half-personal antagonists from whose tyranny Christ has set men free. The new insight into Paul's conception of salvation is to be studied in C. Anderson Scott's great book, *Christianity according to St. Paul*, 1927. A not dissimilar standpoint is adopted in the present writer's book, the manuscript of which was nearly complete when Dr. Anderson Scott's was published, *The Gospel according to St. Paul: A Reinterpretation in the Light of the Religion of his Age and Modern Missionary Experience*, 1928. The contribution which missionary experience has to make to the study of St. Paul is explored also in two German books: Warneck, *Paulus im Lichte der heutigen Heidenmission*<sup>3</sup>, 1922, and Oepke, *Die Missionspredigt des Apostels Paulus*, 1920.

No reference has so far been made to the problem of the authenticity of St. Paul's Epistles, for that

is now of less moment for the understanding of the significance of St. Paul. At the beginning of the period many scholars spoke as if the 'Four Chief Epistles' could alone be claimed with certainty to have been written by St. Paul. Van Manen's statement in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* that none of these Epistles 'are by Paul,' 'they are all without distinction pseudepigrapha,' is to-day generally rejected. P. N. Harrison's *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles*, 1921, has, in the opinion of very many scholars, shown that these Epistles are not as they stand St. Paul's, but that Titus and 2 Timothy embody short authentic letters. 2 Thessalonians and Ephesians are held by some scholars not to be by Paul, but, since Colossians is generally regarded as Paul's, the question does not vitally affect our interpretation of Paul's teaching. Nor has reference been made to one of the most influential of modern expositions of a Pauline Epistle, Barth's *Romans*, for that book is more important for our understanding of Barth than for our understanding of St. Paul.

At the end of his *Saint Paul*, published not fifty but seventy years ago, Renan wrote: 'After having been, owing to orthodox Protestantism, for three hundred years the supreme Christian doctor, Paul sees in our days his reign coming to an end. . . . The writings of Paul have been a peril and a stumbling block, the cause of the principal defects of Christian theology; Paul is the father of the subtle Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, the sombre Calvinist, the peevish Jansenist, and of the cruel theology which damns and predestines to damnation.' History has disproved Renan's prophecy. The reign of Paul is not 'coming to an end.' Never has his significance been more clearly realized by Christian scholars. The researches of the last fifty years have shown that Paul was not, as Renan thought, the perverter of the Christian gospel but its great exponent. We have learned at last to understand his words in the setting of his age and to know how grave is the misunderstanding of those who identify Paul's teaching with the harsher doctrines of later theologians. But the works of Christian scholars are less read than those of literary men like Mr. Bernard Shaw and Mr. H. G. Wells, and they, with less excuse than had Renan, still perpetuate this misunderstanding of Paul's teaching.

To the student of the New Testament, St. Paul's meaning is intelligible to-day as it was not fifty years ago. But much has to be done before his significance is made clear to those as yet unfamiliar with the results of recent Pauline scholarship. This missionary of the first century pressed into the

service of the gospel the conceptions of the Jews and Gentiles whom he addressed, and these conceptions have to be studied before his teaching can be understood. Modern translations like that of Dr. Moffatt's can do much to enable those who know no Greek to understand Paul's words, whilst commentaries like Dr. Dodd's *Romans*, 1932, have shown that by interpreting Paul as a man of the first century his teaching becomes all the more relevant for our age.

The study of St. Paul in the last fifty years has been marked by many aberrations. But from the controversies to which these have led has emerged a new understanding of the significance of the Apostle who not only laboured more than all the rest in extending the knowledge of his Saviour, but more adequately explored the content of the Christian gospel. That is the significance of St. Paul, and it is a significance that can be more clearly seen than was possible fifty years ago.

## St. Paul's Conception of Christ.

BY THE REVEREND G. J. INGLIS, M.A., WARDEN OF STEPHENSON HALL, UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD.

THE Christian conception of Christ is a great theological structure, to which Christians of all generations have contributed. The faithful in every age are called to formulate their own distinctive convictions about their Lord, within the framework of the Christian tradition, in order that they may present Him effectively to the world in which they live. This task is especially urgent at the present time, when the moral and spiritual supremacy of Jesus is being flatly rejected in favour of some form of racial or humanitarian materialism; and there is no better preparation for it than a careful study of those Christian thinkers, such as Paul, who speak to us from the past in language which is strictly relevant to the living issues of to-day.

Paul worked out his conception of Christ against a background of Jewish thought, and he takes for granted the existence and the nature of God as they were apprehended by the Judaism of his time. For him there is only one God, supreme and transcendent; but this God is also the Creator of the world and of mankind, and His power is active in human life. This power, however, is always exercised in accordance with His character, and His character is one of perfect goodness. His distinctive attribute is His complete and absolute holiness or righteousness, and He expects a similar righteousness from His worshippers. If they serve Him by doing His will, they may hope that their faith will be vindicated in the future, when the kingdom or rule of God will become effective in the hearts and minds of all mankind throughout the

world. These principles were the basis of Paul's theology, and he adhered to them both before and after his conversion to the service of Christ.

This conversion was the decisive event in Paul's religious experience, and it exercised a profound influence on every aspect of his thought. The story is told at length in Acts, and its significance for Paul himself is elucidated by a number of allusions in his Epistles. On his journey to Damascus to spur on the persecution of the 'Nazarenes,' he beheld the risen Jesus, who spoke to him and called him to His service.<sup>1</sup> As a result of this experience, Paul accepted Jesus as the Messiah, and responded to the call to serve Him by becoming an ardent apostle of the faith which he had formerly persecuted. Paul had no doubt at all that this change was planned and carried out by God, in accordance with His purpose of redemption for mankind as a whole. He tells the Galatians that 'It was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles.'<sup>2</sup> To Paul himself his conversion was primarily an act of power wrought by God. It was not something which he did, but something which was done to him, and done by God. He was converted to the service of Christ, not only without his own co-operation, but in direct contravention of his own will and desires at the time. Yet it was not an application of irresistible force, but a strong appeal which, in the circum-

<sup>1</sup> Ac 9<sup>1-18</sup> 22<sup>3-21</sup> 26<sup>2-23</sup>.      <sup>2</sup> Gal 1<sup>16-18</sup>.



stances, elicited the appropriate response from himself. The divine agent in this appeal was Jesus Christ; it was the risen and glorified Jesus who spoke to his mind and conscience in a way which won his love for ever. Paul is henceforth the devoted servant of Jesus, whom he worships as his exalted Lord. It is probable that this experience established the conception of Jesus which lies at the back of all his thought. This conception differs from that of the first disciples, who had been personal friends of Jesus during the days of His flesh. To them Jesus must have been primarily the remembered friend, whom they came to know later as the risen Master. To Paul, on the other hand, Jesus is fundamentally a divine and spiritual being, who lives and acts in the lives of His followers. In his case, the eye of faith remains fixed upon the risen and glorified Lord, whom he saw for the first time on the road to Damascus.

This contact was the beginning of his personal relation with Christ, and of his active life as a member and a missionary of the Christian Church. We have no accurate record of the first part of that life, and the earliest of his surviving Epistles must have been written after he had been a Christian for at least fifteen years.<sup>1</sup> During these years he thought out the implications of his conversion, and formulated his conception of Christ in accordance with his personal experience. In that experience there were three main elements: ethical, mystical, and institutional. The ethical element was the assurance of forgiveness gained through Christ; the mystical element was the consciousness of personal communion with Christ; and the institutional element may be found in his pastoral and missionary work as a responsible officer of the Christian society. Each of these elements is closely related to a corresponding aspect of his conception of Christ.

The ethical element in Paul's experience was the assurance of forgiveness, with the consequent consciousness of new moral power. Before his conversion Paul had been troubled and disheartened by moral conflict in the depths of his own personality. He knew what was right, but he had been unable to do it; he had held the highest ideal of goodness, but he had constantly failed to realize it in his own life. He has painted for us a tragic picture of his divided self: the picture of the law of the mind apprehending what is good, but yielding constantly to the pressure of the lower elements,

the law of the members.<sup>2</sup> From this miserable state he had been delivered by the intervention of Christ. By accepting Christ as his Saviour, he had obtained the assurance of God's forgiveness for his sins, and with this assurance the power of sin in his own life was finally broken. Strong in the strength which comes through Christ, he is able to sing a song of triumph over his fallen enemy: 'O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law: but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'<sup>3</sup>

On the basis of this experience of forgiveness, Paul develops his conception of Christ as the Saviour from sin. He had found that when he accepted Christ, he obtained release from the power of sin in his own life, and he argues that what Christ has done for him, He is able to do for all who accept Him as their Saviour. Salvation from sin was brought within man's reach by the death of Jesus, for this death was an act of self-sacrifice carried out by Jesus, in order that the power of sin might be broken once and for all. Jesus Christ, the sinless Messiah or Son of God, offered Himself willingly to death, in order to take upon Himself the penalty which must necessarily be incurred by sinners; and His death was a sacrifice which broke the power of sin in the lives of men, because it enabled God, without compromising His own righteousness, to grant to men forgiveness for their sins.<sup>4</sup> For all men, therefore, Jesus Christ is the Saviour from sin, who 'died for our sins according to the scriptures'; who 'gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God'; so that in Him 'we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins.'<sup>5</sup> The act of salvation which He wrought by His death is available for all who accept Him; but yet for every believer it is invested with an intimate and personal significance, because it was done out of love for every single individual. Paul is never tired of speaking in wonder and gratitude of his Saviour, Jesus Christ, 'who loved me, and gave himself up for me.'<sup>6</sup>

The mystical element in Paul's experience is his consciousness of personal communion or fellowship with the risen Jesus. This communion began with his conversion, when Jesus spoke with him face to face, and it continued throughout the whole course of his life as a Christian. It was not an

<sup>2</sup> Ro 7<sup>1-23</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Co 15<sup>55-57</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Paul expounds his theology of the death of Jesus in such passages as: Gal 3<sup>1-14</sup>, Ro 3<sup>21-26</sup> and 5<sup>1-11</sup> Eph 2<sup>11-22</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Co 15<sup>3</sup>, Eph 5<sup>2</sup>, Col 1<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> Gal 2<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Whatever view we take of the details of the chronology, some such period is implied by the references in Gal 1<sup>18</sup> and 2<sup>1</sup>.

ecstasy which he enjoyed from time to time,<sup>1</sup> but a permanent relation with an unseen friend who was also his Master and Lord. This relation is so close and so continuous that he speaks of it as nothing less than a personal union of himself with Christ. He dwells in Christ, and Christ dwells in him: 'I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me.'<sup>2</sup> In this fundamental passage, Paul affirms the fact of this union, and indicates its nature. It is not an absorption of himself into the divine, but rather the closest possible fellowship between two persons who remain distinct individuals. As such it is a mystical union, but none the less it is morally conditioned: it is attained by Paul only because he has been 'crucified with Christ.' He has accepted Christ as his Saviour, he has died a death unto sin, and he has risen again to a new moral life.<sup>3</sup> Hence his union with Christ imposes upon him a moral imperative to serve Christ, and to suffer on His behalf. And yet at the same time it is an unfailing source of inward happiness, a happiness which the world could neither give nor ever take away. In this union with Christ Paul found 'the peace of God, which passeth all understanding.'<sup>4</sup>

This union, however, is not a privilege reserved for Paul alone; it is open to every believer, and to the Church as a whole. The new life is a life 'in Christ' both for the individual and for the community. 'If any man is in Christ, there is a new creation'<sup>5</sup>; and the whole body of believers are all 'one in Christ Jesus.'<sup>6</sup> But Christ is not only the immediate environment of Christians; He is also a personal power who lives and acts within them. Paul is able to declare directly that 'Christ liveth in me,'<sup>7</sup> and he prays for his converts that 'Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.'<sup>8</sup> Such language implies a conception of Christ as something far more than an object of adoration external to His worshippers. Christ is an indwelling presence, living and active in the life both of every individual believer, and of the Church as a whole. Christ is therefore a divine and spiritual being, free from all the limitations of finitude, and yet capable of entering into the closest personal

union with every one of those who accept Him. Paul expresses the true nature of the risen and glorified Redeemer when he describes Him as 'a life-giving Spirit.'<sup>9</sup>

The institutional element in Paul's experience is his life in the Christian church. He was from the first a member of the Christian society, and an active worker in the common cause. The society which he joined was the fellowship of believers in the Lord Jesus. This fellowship was open to men and women of every race and class,<sup>10</sup> and it offered them the free gift of salvation by bringing them into direct contact with God through Jesus Christ.<sup>11</sup> Paul took a leading part in its regular life, the life of worship, moral effort, theological formulation, and missionary enterprise. This participation in the life of the Christian community led him to formulate a philosophy of the Church. The Church was under the direct control of Christ. Christ had founded it in accordance with the purpose of God, by His own self-sacrifice, Christ inspired its members by His Spirit active in their lives as individuals and as a community, and Christ would reign over it in glory when it had completed its task of reconciling all men to their heavenly Father. In virtue of this relation to Christ, the Church, although composed of many members in different lands, was one and indivisible. It was not merely an aggregate of individuals, or a federation of local associations; it was the instrument through which Christ lived and worked among men, and as such it was an organic unity. Paul expresses this unity when he describes the Church as the body of which Christ is the Head. All Christians are members or limbs of this body, and in its activity each has his appointed part to play; but the whole body is sustained and directed by its divine Head, from whom it receives its life.<sup>12</sup> This life is imparted to the individual member at his baptism, and is nourished by his participation in the Lord's Supper. Christ will continue to work through the Church until His coming again, when the Church has accomplished its task, and the returning Lord can reign over a redeemed race.<sup>13</sup>

In the Church, therefore, Christ was supreme. But such a conception was bound to lead to further developments in thought, because it raised the whole question of the ultimate status of Christ. If Christ was supreme in the Church, what was His relation to God and to the world? This problem

<sup>1</sup> Paul had been granted such ecstatic moments, but he is aware of the moral and spiritual danger which they involve (2 Co 12<sup>1-10</sup>).

<sup>2</sup> Gal 2<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Compare Ro 6<sup>1-11</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Ph 4<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Co 5<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> Gal 3<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> Gal 2<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Eph 3<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> 1 Co 15<sup>46</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Gal 3<sup>28</sup>, Col 3<sup>9-11</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> 2 Co 5<sup>18-19</sup>, Ro 5<sup>1-2</sup>, Eph 2<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> 1 Co 12<sup>12-27</sup>, Eph 1<sup>22-23</sup> 2<sup>19-22</sup> 4<sup>11-16</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> 1 Co 15<sup>20-28</sup>.



was not seriously faced by the first generation of Christians; they thought of Jesus as the Servant or Son of God, and they worshipped Him as their glorified Lord. Paul, however, could not be content to leave it at that: he was obliged to define the truth on many points in order to exclude error from the Church; and he was always driven, by the demands of his own intellect, to work out a theological justification of his personal belief and practice. But the questions did not admit of any easy solution. We have seen that Paul retained, as the basis of his thought, the main principles of Jewish theology; and in that theology the fundamental principle was the conviction that there was only one God, the God of Israel, who was the Creator of mankind and of the world as a whole. Paul could never accept any doctrine of a second deity, because that would involve a plurality in the Godhead; and he could never assent to any form of belief which would sever the connexion between God and the world. But yet, if Christ was supreme in the Church, and if the Church was God's agent in the work of redeeming the world, then Christ must surely stand in a special relation both to God and to the world. Paul does not solve the problem of defining this relation, but he takes a long step towards its solution by making a daring advance in thought.

He made this advance on the basis of his Jewish theology and his Christian experience. Jewish thought after the Exile, in its conviction that God was one and almighty, tended to stress the remoteness of God from the world. God was 'the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy.'<sup>1</sup> But, at the same time, the connexion between God and the world had to be maintained, and therefore God came to be thought of as working in the world through His Wisdom or Word. This Wisdom was regarded almost as a personal power, though the personification is probably poetical rather than theological. In the Book of Proverbs, Wisdom appears as 'a master workman,' who was with God 'when he marked out the foundations of the earth.'<sup>2</sup> In the later book known as the 'Wisdom of Solomon,' Wisdom is described as 'the artificer of all things,' and is depicted as standing in organic relation both to God and to the world:

'For she is a breath of the power of God,  
And a clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty;  
Therefore can nothing defiled find entrance into her.

<sup>1</sup> Is 57<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Pr 8<sup>29-30</sup>.

For she is an effulgence from everlasting light,  
And an unspotted mirror of the working of God,  
And an image of his goodness.  
And she, being one, hath power to do all things;  
And remaining in herself, reneweth all things . . .  
But she reacheth from one end of the world to the  
other with full strength,  
And ordereth all things graciously.'<sup>3</sup>

In this passage, Wisdom is described, in the language of poetry, as the handmaid of God, to whom she owes her existence, and as the agent of God in the work of creating the universe.

It is no matter for surprise that this language, in its mystery and its memorable beauty, should have laid its spell upon Paul, and that the conception which it embodies should spring to his mind when he was searching for forms of thought in which to express the ultimate significance of Christ. Paul takes the momentous step of ascribing to Jesus Christ the functions and attributes which were associated in Jewish theology with the Wisdom or Word of God. He does not describe Christ as 'the Word of God,' but he writes in such a way as to leave no doubt about the identification in his own thought. In the Epistle to the Colossians, where he is concerned to assert the supremacy of Christ, he refers to Him as the beloved Son 'in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins'; and he continues, in language which combines poetry and theology:

'Who is the image of the invisible God,  
The firstborn of all creation;  
For in him were all things created,  
In the heavens and upon the earth,  
Things visible and invisible,  
Whether thrones or dominions or principalities or  
powers;  
All things have been created through him, and unto  
him;  
And he is before all things,  
And in him all things hold together.'<sup>4</sup>

Here he describes Christ as deriving His being from God, as reflecting His glory, and as dwelling with Him before the world was brought into existence. In the work of creation, Christ is the agent or instrument of God through whom the initial task was accomplished, and He is also the sustainer of the universe as it now is, the divine principle of life which constitutes it as a cosmos. Paul adds that all things have been created not only through Christ, but also 'unto him,' and thus implies that Christ is not only the divine agent in creation, but also the divine consummation towards

<sup>3</sup> Wis 7<sup>25</sup>. 26. 27a. 81.

<sup>4</sup> Col 1<sup>15-17</sup>.

whom the world is moving on its appointed course.<sup>1</sup>

In this way Paul seeks to solve the problem with which he was presented: the problem of formulating the relation of Jesus to God and to the world in a way which would preserve the supremacy of the one God, explain the relation between God and the world, and do justice to the Christian estimate of Jesus as Saviour, Spirit, and Head of the Church. Paul does not merely assert the pre-existence of Christ before His life on earth; he asserts this pre-existence in a way which makes Christ integral to the cosmic structure and process as a whole. In his thinking, the work of human redemption appears as a necessary corollary to that of cosmic creation. Both creation and redemption are aspects of the divine economy which is moving towards its destined end, and at both stages of the process Christ is active as the agent or instrument of God, first in creation and then in redemption.

The effect of Paul's identification of Jesus Christ with the Wisdom of God is to elevate the status and to enlarge the functions of Christ to a degree which cannot be measured. Christ is conceived not only as the Saviour from sin, and not only as the life-giving Spirit active in the members of His Church. He stands in an organic relation

<sup>1</sup> Compare Ro 8<sup>20-22</sup> and Eph 1<sup>9-10</sup>.

both to the supreme God and to the universe as a whole. He is the Wisdom or Word of God: He is to God as speech is to speaker; the connexion between them is as close as it can be without involving absolute equality or personal identity. He is also, as the agent of God, the creator and sustainer of the universe, and as such He occupies a position which is subordinate only to that of God Himself. The status and functions of Christ, in relation both to God and to the world, are part of the structure of ultimate reality.

Such believing thoughts as these, which penetrate far into 'the deep things of God,'<sup>2</sup> are not the least valuable part of Paul's legacy to the Church. We do well to lay them to heart, and to ponder the lessons which they convey. But Paul would not have us content to be passive recipients of something which comes down to us from the past. The example which he set is a call to us to work out our own conception of Christ, so that we may present Him, in the fullness of His redeeming love, to the men and women of our time. In so doing we shall be carrying on the work in which Paul himself played so noble a part: the work of drawing all mankind to the knowledge and the service of one who is to us, as He was to Paul, 'Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> 1 Co 2<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Co 1<sup>24</sup>.

## In the Study.

### *Virginitus Puerisque.*

His Faith and Ours.

BY THE REVEREND SIDNEY GRAY, B.A.,  
SAFFRON WALDEN, ESSEX.

'I have prayed that your own faith may not fail.'—  
Lk 22<sup>32</sup> (Moffatt).

How many of you remember anything of the series of cricket matches which were played this spring in South Africa? If you remember anything, I expect it is about the last match, the Fifth Test Match. For one thing, it lasted for ten days and then didn't quite get finished. England and South Africa between them scored 1981 runs, which was a record for any first-class match. I expect among

your memories of the match you will find the name Edrich.

I saw Billy Edrich play for Norfolk when he was only a schoolboy, and I'm pretty sure he was something of a hero at Bracondale School, Norwich, and is more than ever a hero now. I think it was in the year that he left school that he first played against the Australians, while still playing for Norfolk, and in the first innings he got a century. It sounds like a good school yarn doesn't it, but it's true, unless I was dreaming that afternoon on the Lakenham Ground at Norwich. Then he was advised to play for a more prominent team, and went to Middlesex, and the first year he was qualified he had such a brilliant season that people began to talk



about what he, and other young players, would do to the Australians when they came to England. They came, and Edrich was chosen for the Test Matches, but what disappointment was in store. He sometimes bowled and took a wicket, and his fielding was usually splendid, but his batting, for which he was chosen, was a failure. Sometimes he would manage to stay for a while and score just a few runs, and sometimes he was out more quickly. Before the Test Matches were over people were saying in the newspapers that he ought to be left out because he had failed so often. But he was chosen again. When, at the end of the season, a team was chosen to go to South Africa, he was still chosen; but again, in the Test Matches there, he had little success. He was put lower in the batting order, and when the Fifth Test came he was placed fourth wicket down in the first innings and then scored—one run. The second innings came and England had to get the impossible total of nearly 700 runs. No team had ever got so many in the fourth innings. They made a fair start, but the first wicket fell at 78. I wonder if we shall be allowed to imagine what was happening in the English dressing-room. I think that fine captain, W. R. Hammond, said something like this: 'Bill, I'm sending you in next. We're in a tight corner and you've got to "do your stuff." You've got it in you. Good luck!'

It's a matter of cricket history that Billy Edrich didn't let the side down this time. Not till he had scored 219 was he out; and among other things he had set his side on the way to accomplishing the impossible task. The game was never finished for the train was waiting to bring the English side home, but, of course, really, we won.

It was a great thing for the captain to do, but a good captain never loses faith in his men, and isn't it true that the captain's faith helps his men to have faith in themselves. I'm sure that Edrich would tell us, if he could, that it was true. The captain's faith gave him faith, and courage too, so that he could face the impossible task without fear.

All this makes us think of a greater Captain, the Lord Jesus, who never loses faith in His men, though they fail so often. In the New Testament we read how the greatest Captain had a man in His team who was often failing and making mistakes. He was a man who sometimes thought he could do nearly everything; he was splendid in his boldness; on one occasion he said: 'Though I should die with Thee yet will I not betray Thee.' But the Captain knew in His heart that Simon Peter would fail again, and yet He did not give up faith in him,

and He did not want Simon Peter to give up faith in himself, because a day was coming when Peter would forget his failures, and when his side was facing something bigger than any team had faced before he would be the Captain's right-hand man to lead the side to victory. We know the Captain was not mistaken.

Sir Henry Newbolt has lines about cricket in a school:

There's a breathless hush in the Close to-night—

Ten to make and the match to win—

A bumping pitch and a blinding light,

An hour to play and the last man in.

And it's not for the sake of a ribboned coat,

Or the selfish hope of a season's fame,

But his Captain's hand on his shoulder smote—

'Play up! Play up! and play the game!'

We have a great Captain in life, and He comes to us when we are young and when we are old, and He wants us to play a good innings for Him. Perhaps we may fail more than once, but He sends us out again; and He can do for us what no cricket captain can do, for He says, 'Remember I am with you, and I will help you, if you will let Me.'

### Spare the Wasps.

BY THE REVEREND SIDNEY H. PRICE,  
GREAT SHELFORD, CAMBRIDGE.

'Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it.'—Is 65<sup>8</sup>.

Have you ever known anybody say a good word for wasps? They are really very interesting creatures if only they would keep their tempers.

I want to put in a good word for them, and ask you to spare them, especially as the early spring was very cold and many wasps may have died on that account, and there may even be a shortage of them. Perhaps you think such a shortage would be good. You will remind me of the damage they do in the orchard, spoiling all the nicest plums and pears and apples.

Why, then, do I ask you to spare the wasps? Well, it has been noticed that, when there are few wasps, some other destructive insects are there in abundance. In 1936, for instance, when there was a shortage of wasps, there was a plague of leather-jackets, and they did far more damage in the gardens and fields than the wasps ever do. The famous cricket ground at Lords was almost ruined by the leather-jackets that year. That would not

have happened if there had been more wasps, because they feed on the leather-jackets. Caterpillars and spiders and blow-flies all find their way into the wasp's pantry, so, you see, we ought to be very grateful to the wasps. Other points in their favour could be mentioned too. Like bees, they work among the blossoms and so help to fertilize the fruit trees. All the same, I suppose most of you will feel that the wasp's presence about the house is undesirable, and I hope that during the coming weeks you will not have the misfortune to be stung.

What this good word for wasps amounts to, then, is this: the wasp is a good fellow on the whole, and very useful, but . . . well, it is his sting we dislike. I have heard people talk like that about boys and girls. They say, 'So and so is good at heart. He does not intend to be unkind or spiteful. That temper is just his weak point.' It is generous of our friends to excuse us like that, but how much better it would be if we controlled our tempers and always behaved kindly.

There is a story in the Old Testament of a man named Nabal who was rather wasp-like.

David and his men had protected Nabal's property against an enemy, but Nabal showed no gratitude. When David's men needed food, he sent messengers to Nabal and asked for his help, but Nabal answered in a very surly manner. 'Shall I take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men of whom I know not whence they be?' And he refused to give them anything. The messengers returned and told David. He was so angry that he set out at once to punish him. Fortunately, however, Nabal had a wise and good wife, Abigail. When she heard of what had happened, she prepared a generous present for David and his men, and went herself to meet him. She told him she was sorry her husband was so surly and ungrateful, and asked David to accept her present. From that day onwards, Abigail and David became good friends.

Nabal may have been a good fellow on the whole. We do not know. This is the only story we have about him, and it certainly leaves us with a bad impression of him. That is what usually happens when people have ugly tempers, and say things that sting. It is no use dressing up smartly like the wasps if we are always ready to sting people by saying unkind things. How much better it is to be like Abigail, wise and good and thoughtful for other people.

We know One who can help us to be like that, and

we come here to worship Him and ask Him to take control of our lives.

## The Christian Year.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

### The Silences of Revelation.

BY THE REVEREND J. IRELAND HASLER, B.A.,  
ORPINGTON.

'If it were not so, I would have told you.'—Jn 14<sup>2</sup>.

Our minds are usually so obsessed with the mention of the 'many mansions' that we miss the significance of this parenthetical remark which follows. Upon the disciples was falling the shadow of a dread eclipse. Their Master was leaving them, and without Him life appeared an utter blank. All that He had told them was that He was returning to the Father. If the other world were not equally part of the Father's House as well as this one, if there were not room in it for them as well as for Him, if His approaching departure meant an eternal severance instead of a temporary separation—He would have told them. It was true He had not told them much about the Unseen World, but He had told them much about the Unseen Father. Could they not trust *Him*? Would it not be inconsistent with God's character to suppose that He would leave the followers of His Christ out in the cold? 'Believe in God,' He said, and 'believe in Me.'

Note the principle underlying these words. Because God as revealed in Christ is loving and faithful, He cannot ultimately disappoint His children. We can depend upon the divine silence in some things as confidently as upon the divine promise in others, because in both the basis of our trust is the nature and character of the Eternal. The silence of Eternity can be interpreted by love. Christ wanted His followers to centre their thoughts not so much upon what had been said, or not said, as upon what they had learned God to be—on the vision of the Father. Christendom has not yet learned that lesson. Much of the controversy amongst Christians has been due to the fact that they have wrangled over words—over what has been written or what they thought had been written. The printed word has obscured the Personality. Christianity is not centred in a book but in a Person.

1. *Jesus Christ has not told us all that is.* He Himself referred to future knowledge yet to be



disclosed—'I have yet many things to say, but ye cannot bear them now.' He spoke too of fuller truth into which His followers would be led by the Spirit. He did not answer every question that was asked Him, for example, 'Are there few that be saved?'—'What shall this man do?' He wanted His own to differentiate between essentials and what was secondary, between the important and the trivial.

It is the same with regard to the whole of the Biblical revelation. There are gaps and deficiencies in it from a human point of view. May not these be a mark of its divine origin? At any rate, it differs in this respect from the revelations claimed by some of the ethnic faiths. A Hindu once asked a missionary for the Christian answer to various questionings, mostly of a metaphysical nature, and then claimed that Christianity could not be the ultimate and universal religion if it failed to answer everything. Hinduism claims that the Vedas are a repertory of all knowledge. Islam asserts that the Qur'ān is final and summary. Even with the New Testament in his hand the Christian has to confess 'We know in part.' 'God has yet more light to break forth from His Word.' It has been said that there is no heresy but finality. 'Many other things did Jesus do which are not written.' It is the finite which is voluble of speech: the infinite is largely silent. There is an agnosticism that is Christian. It does not merely say, 'We do not know,' but 'We do not know yet.' 'We do not know all, but we know him.'

2. *Jesus Christ has told us all that is necessary.* We need not bewail our limited knowledge of the Life of Lives. Enough has been written for our attainment of eternal life though not for perfect knowledge. Even though Christ did not answer every question, He answered every important question, for example, 'What shall I do to inherit eternal life?'—'Who is my neighbour?' True wisdom lies in recognizing the sufficiency of the knowledge which we have and acting upon that. The written revelation is like the revelation in Nature. The most needful things—air, light, water, food—are the most easily accessible. We know all that we need to know about the duties, sins, and sorrows of the present: it is when we come to the problems of the present or speculations concerning the future that we find the limitations of our knowledge. Specially is this the case with regard to the unseen world. Christ has told us much about God, but little about Heaven, and His reticence on this matter is a great contrast to the volubility of others. Just as in regard to truth generally Christ sought to

concentrate thought on a Person rather than on an utterance or book, so also in regard to the life beyond, on a Person rather than on a place. As Baxter wrote:

My knowledge of that life is small,  
The eye of faith is dim;  
But 'tis enough that Christ knows all,  
And I shall be with Him.

3. *His silence is not denial; it may be a form of speech.* To the Syro-Phœnician woman Christ answered not a word. Yet eventually He fulfilled her longings, and His silence served but to exhibit her faith. There are yearnings and aspirations which arise in our hearts after reading His words or pondering life's problems. If they are never to be realized, would He not have told us? There are the myriads who pass away from earth without ever having heard or fully understood the gospel, and there have been some who with the little measuring-line of a text have limited the justice and the love of God. And with them must be conjoined the children of want and woe and sin in Christian lands, who have been handicapped by heredity and environment. If such are to suffer hopelessly there as well as here, would He not have told us? I like the words written by Dr. David Smith some years ago: 'If we were more truly Christian we would be less concerned about the hereafter. For we would have a braver trust in God. . . . He is the Father of us all and in view of the revelation of His heart in His Eternal Son. . . . I am well content to leave the worst of His children in His hands. It fortifies the soul in face of human wrong to recognize that the God and Father of our Saviour Christ is Lord of all, and here and hereafter He will do for every child of His undying affection the best that love can devise.' There are those, too, who cannot repeat our creed, yet they have sought to champion righteousness, manifested self-sacrifice and toiled to brighten and better the earth. He has not told us that such will find *no* place prepared for them there.

The absence of a denial on His part has a meaning. The absence of a positive denial gives room for a positive hope *so far as that hope is in harmony with the general trend of revelation and with what we know of the character of God.* 'Those who have known the word of God,' said Ignatius, 'can bear His silence.' So Christ would say to us when we are troubled by dogmatic assertions or when we are heart-heavy, because we cannot understand all His dealings or comprehend all that lies before or beyond—'Don't you know *Me* better than to suppose that your

forebodings have any basis? Have faith in God; have faith in Me.'

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,  
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,  
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,  
Believing where we cannot prove.

If we know not all yet, we know Him, and for the rest we can wait. Time—Death—God—these are the best interpreters.

#### SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

##### Songs in a Prison.

'And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.'—Ac 16<sup>26</sup>.

St. Paul's later feeling about Philippi was curiously unlike his actual experience there. Read through his letter to the Philippian Church, and you find that it breathes the very spirit of joy. It is the one Epistle in which there is no rebuke. The lonely, homeless man had made friends in that Roman colony whose trusty love formed the sunniest spot in all his life. But, if we had only this narrative of Acts to go by, we might well suppose he would never more care to mention its name. Nowhere had the mob been more cruel; nowhere had the Roman magistrates been so insulting. If all that is forgotten later, lost in satisfaction at the progress of the gospel, that is just another example, is it not?—that the eye sees what it brings with it the power to see. Where to ordinary sight there lies nothing but the gloom of wrong and insult, faith can throw round it the halo of the Cross.

There was gladness in Paul's recollection, but we must not think that the discovery only broke upon him later. Our text shows that he and his like-minded comrade sang when things were at their worst and it seemed midnight within as really as without. And it is from this angle that we look at the incident.

1. *What it may cost to be faithful to Jesus Christ.* Not much is said about the apostles' situation, but that it must have been sufficiently painful and loathsome is clear if we recollect that the inner prison, opening only from the outer, was dark, cold, unventilated, and probably anything but clean or dry. Condemnation to the stocks, too, meant that their limbs were fastened for hours so awkwardly as almost to induce dislocation. Besides, when they were flung in after scourging it must have been more dead than alive. Paul had never been robust, yet he had undergone treatment which, if it were dealt

out to a British missionary to-day, would make the blood of a nation run cold, and would lead to great activity, it is more than probable, in the Foreign Office.

What had been the occasion of it all? A Latin writer speaks of these early Christians as enemies of the human race; had these men done anything during their stay to earn that reproach? Why, their one offence lay in having brought the influence of Christ to bear upon a poor afflicted girl, and by His power restored her to sanity and freedom. Hence the fury of the syndicate which had been fattening on the proceeds of her supposed powers of fortune-telling, and whose pocket has been touched too sorely for pardon. Men will listen readily enough to the gospel so long as it keeps what they call its proper place, but bring it into collision with dubious modes of making money, whether on the Congo or in Great Britain, and you let loose the beast in man. People tell us that Christianity has nothing to do with social reform; why, here is a trade, a hurtful pestilential trade, stopped by an apostle. But, of course, there was a price to pay.

What we have before us, then, is pain endured gladly for Christ's sake, and the proof of sincerity and keenness, past all dispute, which goes along with that. Don't these sufferers seem to have the advantage of us? Don't they make us feel rather poor creatures? After reading a story like this, or a parallel from modern missions, one has an uncomfortable feeling, occasionally, that our discipleship is hardly of the same type as theirs. If people never suspect we *are* Christians until, as in the case of a well-known literary man some years ago, they read it in our will after we are dead, our testimony for God will not count for much.

We may be sure, anyhow, that fidelity to Christ involves hardship even now. People can make it very unpleasant for the man who will not share their dishonest practices, or who takes a hand in opposing the drinking or betting customs of the set in which he moves. Apart from all that, whatever outward endurance may be laid on us, there is stern conflict for every good soldier of Christ in the inner life and in the hand-to-hand struggle with forbidden thought or evil temper. In the discipline of his own life every man will find enough alike of suffering and of strain to brace his will and test his loyalty to the great Leader.

2. *Faith rises victorious over circumstance.* In the earlier part of the night Paul and Silas, in their black, stifling dungeon, would comfort each other with good talk; but by midnight, it appears, their spirits rose to such a pitch that some outlet had to



be found for exultation. So they began to sing, chanting the psalms we ourselves use, praying too at intervals. It was a spontaneous burst of honest gladness, not like whistling to keep up their courage, but the simple overflow of trust and praise. Had such a scene ever happened in the world before? Well, if not, there have been many like it since.

Observe the conjunction of these two things—prayer and song. It was prayer that gave them heart to sing; without it the song would have tailed off in weariness. There is this too—they went far beyond merely accepting their lot, and bowing in resignation to a mysterious higher will; they *sang* over it. Now, only faith in Jesus fed by prayer can show this. Elsewhere you will seek it in vain. Stoicism, ancient or modern, never *sings*. It may knit its brow, it may set its teeth, but it cannot sing, it has no great redeeming Friend to sing to. But faith can strike the chords even in the black midnight hour, because it knows that the ear of the Father is listening and taking pleasure in the sound. Like some castle with its unfailing well in the courtyard, it has a fount of gladness within itself which nothing that touches the outside can cut off.

We need scarcely ask how the behaviour of these men is to be explained. Only, be very sure, it was not because they knew an earthquake was coming to bring immediate release. Apostles were not always delivered, as we say familiarly, 'in the nick of time.' There is plenty of evidence of that even in this Book, as when 'Herod stretched forth his hands, and killed James the brother of John with the sword.' If our faith is only a lively sense of outward favours to come, and not confidence in *God Himself*, its sustaining power will be very superficial and very evanescent. No; it all came from their firm hold on Jesus Christ. Is it not the fact that faith's assurance has often a new security imparted to it, and therefore a profounder gladness, by the onset of trouble and sorrow? There are unrevealed treasures for the expectant heart in Christ's faithful love which come to light only when our weakness has grown most defenceless.

3. *Glad faith signifies much for other people.* Our text is translated thus by Sir William Ramsay: 'Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening.' The whole house was awake. The air, it may be, was filled with the strange heat and hush that precede an earthquake; at any rate, the poor wretches who stood or lay round about in the pitchy night, their chains stapled to the wall, were listening with all their ears to the unaccustomed sound. Not to his

latest day would Paul pray or sing with such a company, or one that so much needed his prayers and psalms. Who can tell but that, like evangelists of a later day, Paul and Silas *sang* the gospel into the heart of some poor vagrant fettered in the outer court?

Now that was Paul and Silas' *family worship*, and their neighbours were listening. How many of us light that altar day by day? Dr. John Brown—the author of *Rab*—tells of his father's beadle, in Edinburgh, who lived in one of these great swarming tenements in the High Street, and whose faithful evening psalm was well-nigh the only note of gospel hope ever heard amongst them. And many a prisoner of sin, pausing on the stairs, would catch the song—would listen and sigh, and remember, and whisper an old forgotten prayer.

Had Paul and Silas only prayed quietly, no one would have wondered; but no! they sang like men devoid of fear. Many of us have a curious pride in concealing what is best in us. We dread the charge of ostentation, and, in the only too natural effort to practise a modest silence, the voice of testimony falls dumb. We need not say how serious the injury is to our own lives, and Christ laid amazing emphasis on open confession; but are we to think of no one but ourselves? May it not be that some other, with tried and shadowed faith, would hail with delight and reassurance the voice of another's trust, and drink in from it power and comfort?

These are the tones to brace and cheer

The lonely watcher of the fold,

When nights are dark, and foemen near,

When visions fade, and hearts are cold.

How timely then a comrade's song

Comes floating on the mountain air,

And bids thee yet be brave and strong—

Fancy may die, but Faith is there.<sup>1</sup>

#### EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

##### Christ in Morality.

'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.'—Ph. 2<sup>a</sup>.

In the last century, and mainly in the Reformed churches, Lives of Christ became popular, as they still are. It was assumed that the Gospels furnish us with a complete pattern of how the Christian ought to behave in all the relations of life. Some of these Lives were written by scholars of great eminence, but we can now see that the figure of

<sup>1</sup> H. R. Mackintosh, *Sermons*, 151.

Christ was taken out of its historical setting, and that the portrait was coloured too deeply with the ethical ideals of modern times. It would be grotesque, if it were not touching and pathetic, to see how each nation, and each biographer, dresses up that figure in the draperies, the uniform, which they themselves most admire.

Are we then to infer, with some critics who are predisposed to general scepticism, that the character of the historical Jesus is lost to us, and that His moral teaching was deeply infected by the expectation that a miraculous 'end of the age' was near at hand? We are very far from thinking so. It is true that the Incarnation was not at an end when our Lord's bodily presence was withdrawn from the earth. It is true that in the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church and in the hearts of individuals we have a permanent Advocate, Guide, and Comforter, who may have much to say to us which the first disciples 'could not bear' to hear. All this is true; but we maintain that in the Gospels we have a test and standard to which we may and ought to bring all that we think, hear, or read about the whole duty of man and his relation to God. Otherwise, we should be left to the unassisted guidance of our own best thoughts, with the name of Christ as a peg to hang them on. Other foundation can no man lay save that which is laid, even Christ. This subject of Christian Ethics is a very large one, and all we can do is to give a few thoughts which bear upon it.

First, what were the moral faults which aroused the displeasure, even the hot indignation, of our Saviour? Who were the persons who had less chance even than 'publicans and harlots' of entering into the Kingdom of Heaven? They were the men with tight-shut minds; self-satisfied, unteachable, impenetrable. They knew they were right; the tradition of the Elders was enough for them; they did not want to learn. To them Christ said, and still says, 'Except ye turn, and become as little children'—trustful, receptive, and humble—'ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.'

Our Lord gave a bad name to 'hypocrisy,' which only means 'acting,' not the base duplicity of a Tartuffe or a Pecksniff. He laid the greatest stress on the single eye, the pure heart: 'Ye cannot serve two masters,' He said. The good Christian hides nothing because he has nothing to hide; his outward conduct, simple and unstudied, is the reflection of the inner man of the heart. A seveneenth-century writer says: 'The double heart makes the double head'—he who will not act straight loses the power of seeing straight. A man

is not a *great* hypocrite until he has left off knowing that he is one; and what chance of recovery is there then for him?

Hard-heartedness, absence of real affection for others—is for Christ another cardinal sin. He is original in declaring that love admits us further into the deeper secrets of life than intellectual subtlety or extensive knowledge. 'We know,' says the First Epistle of St. John, 'that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.' Pagan and Neopagan philosophy is reluctant to acknowledge this, because the loving heart has once for all surrendered the privilege of being invulnerable, the very thing which all the philosophers promised to themselves and their disciples. This is one of the most distinctive and characteristic parts of Christianity. Christianity does not promise to make you independent of others. They can help you and they can hurt you, and you can help and hurt them.

The third cardinal sin is worldliness, of which the service of Mammon is only one form. The worldling has no eyes except for the things which help or thwart him in his career. He has got his values utterly wrong, and he misses all that makes life worth living. 'I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.' The surrender of the will is itself the strongest assertion of the will, its steady direction to one end. Our Lord hardly ever talked about sin in the abstract, but much about the sins that come from a wrong direction of the will and heart. 'For their sakes I consecrate myself'—for the sake of our brethren, since what we do or leave undone for them, we do or leave undone for Christ.

Think of the Beatitudes. Consider the promises of *blessedness*—that is to say, the kind of happiness which we should desire if we knew wherein the *summum bonum* for man consists, and how they are attached to all those conditions which the natural man regards as most undesirable. This is not asceticism; it is heroism. 'Rejoice and be exceeding glad,' when men shall revile you and persecute you. It is one of the chief Christian virtues, and it belongs to those who do not shirk pain and suffering, but who accept and transmute them. The old quarrel between world-acceptance and world-renunciation finds its solution here. It reaches its climax in the famous words: 'He that wishes to save his soul shall lose it, and he that is willing to lose his soul shall save it unto life eternal.'

Two other words may be considered—Peace and Power. There is only one way of peace for us in this life, and it is the way through civil war. Our natures are not harmonious to start with. There is



in each of us an 'old man,' who must be severely dealt with. Do not listen to Freudian nonsense about 'repression.' There is a part of us which needs to be repressed if our higher nature is to gain freedom. Peace is the result of inner victory over the rebels. It is an armed peace to the end; but those who have gained it, value it above gold and precious stones. 'The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.'

The other word is Power. 'His word was with power.' 'As many as received him, to them gave he power to become children of God.' There is always power in disinterestedness. It has to be reckoned with; it cannot be bought; and it attracts the allegiance of honest seekers. It is power also in the inner life. It assures us, as we are sometimes inclined to doubt, that we are good for something; it puts new spirit into us when we are faint-hearted; it assures us that those for whom Christ died cannot be insignificant.

'I want to be myself,' we hear sometimes. Our personality is something precious, which must be allowed to grow to its full capacity in its own way. There is a sense in which this is true. But we venture to think that the idea of self-expression gives us very little practical help, and may be a snare. For after all, what is this precious thing, the self, which is somehow both *we* and our property? William James says there is a physical Me, a social Me, and a spiritual Me. Three different *Me's*, and none of them the same for two weeks together. All three are growing or changing or decaying. The question therefore presses, Which self am I to realize, to develop, to cultivate? It may be only the animal self; or the average man which St. Paul and the Platonists call the *psychic* man; or it may be the hidden man of the heart, the spiritual man who at best is still being painfully formed within us. The whole process of spiritual growth consists in rising on stepping-stones of our dead selves to higher things. And in this process the personality expands; it is no longer merely individual. It is linked with the lives of others; it is drawn upward by the indwelling and sanctifying Spirit of God. If we must put it into philosophical language, the secret of the gospel is self-realization through self-surrender.

But Christ does not give us 'mere morality.' Life for Him is theocentric; ethics pass into religion. As compared with Pharisaism, the gospel may almost be called antinomian; 'Love, and do what you like.' 'If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.' But this freedom is won

by 'bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.' 'My yoke is easy, and my burden is light'; but yet that burden is the Cross.<sup>1</sup>

#### NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

##### How to meet Temptation.

By THE REVEREND J. D. JONES, M.A., DULWICH.

'Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report . . . think on these things.'—Ph 4<sup>a</sup>.

Temptation is a universal fact, but temptation is not sin. As human beings we cannot help experiencing desires which are out of harmony with the will of God, but sin is committed only when we yield to them. If we flee from these evil desires or control them, then we remain sinless even though the sinful suggestion has appeared in our consciousness. Tennant has rightly insisted that we must distinguish between the thought of evil and an 'evil thought.' We cannot prevent the thought of evil arising any more than we can prevent the craving for meat and drink when these things have long been withheld. That thought of evil does not pollute the mind until it is retained and cherished for the sake of lawless enjoyment. 'Nothing from without,' says Tennant, '—that is, nothing apart from the moral intention of the will—pollutes a man: only that which comes from within, bearing the will's impress and so evincing the real desire and aim of the man, his personal attitude towards the good and towards God.' That point must be emphasized. Many people are made miserable because of the thought of evil in their minds. They would blush to speak of the forms in which evil at times suggests itself to them. But that is not sin; the temptation is common to all men by reason of their human nature. The sin arises when you give lodgment to the thought of evil, when you cherish it, and finally respond to its suggestion.

Milton in 'Paradise Lost,' says that:

Evil into the mind of God or Man  
May come and go, so unapproved, and leave  
No spot or blame behind.

If our Lord was tempted, and we are assured that He was, then temptation in itself cannot be sin. Many of our temptations spring from our natural impulses which belong to the animal. These in themselves are neither good nor evil. But by the

<sup>1</sup> W. R. Inge, in *Christ in University Life*, 86.

grace of God they may become the foundation of a pure and virile character.

Now, temptation takes different forms with all of us. The commonest temptation is just to be selfish; to be so wrapped up in our own concerns and affairs that we haven't a thought for others; to be so complacent when things are going well with us that we become callously indifferent to the troubles and sufferings of others. Or we are tempted to the sin of depression and sullenness, to be irritated over trifles. Or we are tempted to be proud and overbearing; to be slack while all around the world is crying out for workers. Or we are tempted to intemperance in food and drink, to be obsessed with concern for physical comfort.

To this catalogue of temptations one must add thoughts of resentment, or anger, or envy. Dr. Inge has said that what is called the nursing of grievances is specially mischievous. He points out that if we brood over an injury until it becomes an obsession we come to imagine that we have been wronged twenty times instead of once, and accordingly we are twenty times more angry than we ought to have been. And it is all very tiring and exhausting.

We all have a weak spot somewhere and danger arises when we are blind to it. 'Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall.'

How are we to meet those temptations that assail our human nature? There is a right way and a wrong way. Many people concentrate on their particular temptations. They pray about them; their minds get fixed on them, until finally they are obsessed by them. It is true that in the first instance we have to face our temptations, and be genuinely desirous of overcoming them. That is the starting point of every true life. But that does not mean we are to be constantly thinking about and brooding over them. The psychologists tell us that if we think much of wrong things the firmer their grip upon us will become. Jesus knew this long, long ago. If you turn to the New Testament, you will find that its essential message may be expressed in a few words. It is this: when temptation assails you, don't get into a panic, trying to make a desperate and wild resistance. Think about something else. Jesus was rarely negative in His teaching. Dr. Herbert Gray has pointed out that He talked very little about sins, but He talked a great deal about the positive direction of thought and energy. Go! Do! Be! Give! Love! Serve! Seek the lost! Fight the world's evil! But supremely must our minds be filled with good, positive thoughts. 'Whatsoever

things are true—honest—just—pure—lovely—of good report—think on these things.' Fill your mind with good positive thoughts, and the thought of evil will be crowded out. Paul here puts his finger on the positive way of defending character. To have the mind full of good things is its best defence against evil things.

The principle we are considering is true not only in the matter of temptation. If we could fill our minds with the thought of God and His power, His joy and His peace, our lives would cease to be weak, vacillating, ineffective. They would become strong, purposeful, free. Here is a man, restless, feverish, anxious. What he needs above all is a quiet mind. How shall he attain it? Let him relax his body. Let his mind dwell on that attribute of God which is the opposite of his restlessness and feverishness, in this case the peace of God. Let him repeat quietly to himself, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee.' Let his mind accept the thought that God's peace is replacing his feverishness, his anxiety, his restlessness, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding will become a garrison to guard his heart and thoughts. This is the spirit of Mk 11<sup>24</sup>: 'Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall receive them.' Some call this auto-suggestion. But the label matters little. To call it such is only to name the door through which God comes.

Let us take one more case in illustration of the principle we are considering. Here is a man whose personality is divided. The elements of his nature are at war with each other. There is conflict in his soul. His life has ceased to be harmonious. He is scarred and wounded by the fight. What he needs above all is the healing touch of God's Spirit. How shall he receive it? Let his mind dwell on the thought of God as the Great Healer. Let him repeat quietly and restfully to himself, 'There is a Divine Power within me that makes and keeps me perfectly whole.' Let his mind just rest in that truth, and in the silence healing will come. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.' Fill your mind with the thought of God and His attributes—His power, His joy, His peace—and you will find that your old conflicts, your depression, your restlessness will shrink away like mists before the rising sun. It is not, as some one said, that you have found God. It is that at last, in your feverish, hurried life, you have given Him a chance to do



what He has been trying all along to do—to find you.

Thomas Chalmers used to speak of the expulsive power of a new affection. New thoughts have the same expulsive power. Fill the mind with noble and beautiful interests and the ugly will be crowded out. There will be no room for them.

Weatherhead, in one of his volumes, relates the story of a man who visited a friend of his and found the walls of his room decorated with unclean and ugly pictures. He said nothing about it, but a few

days later he sent his friend a most beautiful picture of Christ. The man was faced with a problem. Either he must refuse to hang the picture of Christ, or he must take the others down. He took the others down. So when the picture of Christ hangs in the mind, all our ugly, sordid, thought-pictures will come down by themselves.

'Make me beautiful within,' prayed Augustine, long, long ago. That beauty of the inner shrine of our hearts is the only real beauty, and it is fashioned by the thoughts we think.

## Jesus, the Syro-Phœnician Woman—and the Disciples.

BY THE REVEREND JAMES D. SMART, M.A., PH.D., GALT, ONTARIO, CANADA.

THE story of Jesus' dealing with the Syro-Phœnician woman has long been a source of perplexity to Christians. The attitude of Jesus throughout the incident is so different from all that we would expect of Him. Not just once, but three times does this strange attitude show itself—first, when He remained silent and unresponsive to the woman's outcry; second, when He asserted that His ministry was to Jews alone; and third, when He spoke the seemingly harsh and cruel words about casting the children's bread to dogs. This does not seem to be the same Jesus who appears elsewhere in the Gospels, who responded instantly to the cry of need, who was gentleness personified to every one in every trouble. Moreover, the Jesus, who in the Parable of the Good Samaritan made it clear that a true neighbourliness overleaps all national barriers when confronted by human need, cannot be conceived as withholding His compassion and help from this woman merely because she happened to be a foreigner.

Attempts have been made, on the one hand, to soften the harshness of Jesus' words, and, on the other hand, to justify Him in His behaviour toward the woman, but they have the unfortunate effect of demeaning Jesus and they quite fail to overcome the offence of the passage. It has been pointed out that the word which Jesus uses for 'dogs' is a diminutive and therefore denotes household pets. A. B. Bruce (*Expositor's Greek Testament*, 217) thinks Jesus' words were 'playful, humorous, bantering in tone.' A. H. McNeile (*Gospel according*

to *St. Matthew*, 231) is 'sure that a tenderness of manner would deprive them of all their sting.' But it remains that in the East, and particularly for Jews, the epithet 'dog' was a severe term of reproach. Even the use of the diminutive does not clear away the offence of the seemingly negative attitude which Jesus took toward the woman. The silence and the assertion of an exclusive mission are not explained away.

The commonest justification of Jesus' behaviour is to say that He was making trial of the woman's faith. He was forcing her to be like the importunate widow who, by persisting in her plea to the unjust judge, ultimately received satisfaction. But it was not like Jesus to play with a woman of faith in her time of need, testing out the strength of her faith. There is something revolting in the thought that He did it here. Surely He would recognize at once the quality of the woman's faith. He did not have to put pressure upon it to find its strength. And there is no evidence elsewhere of His testing any one's faith in such a manner as this.

Another suggestion has been that Jesus' initial silence was due to uncertainty in His own mind what He should do in this situation. Johannes Weiss seems to have originated this line of interpretation, saying that Jesus was engaged in internal debate whether to allow His compassion to override the limits of His mission. A. B. Bruce (*Expositor's Greek Testament*, 216) says: 'There was probably a mixture of feelings in Christ's mind at this time; an aversion to recommence just then a healing

ministry at all—a craving for rest and retirement ; a disinclination to be drawn into a ministry among a heathen people, which would mar the unity of His career as a prophet of God to Israel.' Can Jesus be conceived as harbouring such considerations and weighing them in His mind, saying to Himself, ' Shall I grant this woman's request, or shall I preserve the unity of my career as a prophet of God to Israel ? '

A. H. M'Neile (*ib.* 231) thinks that v.<sup>26</sup> may represent a continuation of Jesus' mental struggle, that He was saying to Himself: ' Dare I take the children's bread and cast it unto dogs ? ' Bruce carries this a step further: ' Probably the mother read conflict and irresolution in Christ's face, and thence drew encouragement.' This, then, was a Christ who was unsure whether to heal or not to heal and had to be won over by the woman's entreaties. To such embarrassing conclusions do almost all the explanations of this difficult passage lead us. It is also a problem to explain how such an incident happened to be preserved in the teaching of the Church when it was plainly open to very serious understanding.

The last question suggests a new mode of approach. Why was this incident cherished by the Church ? Form-criticism has made us familiar with the principle that records owed their preservation not to any purely historical interest but to their value in teaching, and therefore there are likely to be indications in them of the tendency of the particular teacher. The issues of the Early Church are mirrored in the literature of the New Testament. The pertinent question, therefore, is whether there was an issue which would cause the story of the Syro-Phœnician woman to be of significance. One does not read far in the history of the Apostolic Church to find exactly what is required, the controversy between the Judaizing party and the Pauline churches. Paul taught the abolition of all national distinctions in Christ and stood out for the universality of the gospel. The non-Jew had, according to his mind, as much claim to the benefits of Christ as had the Jews. The middle wall of partition was broken down. But many of the Jewish Christians regarded this view as unwarrantably broad, and opposed it bitterly. To them the Christian gospel, preached by a Jew to Jews, was the peculiar property of the Jewish race. Foreigners who would participate in its benefits must first cease to be foreigners by accepting the formal observances which denoted Jewish nationality. This latter viewpoint, which now appears to us so narrow and incomprehensible, had

for many years the greater prestige and endorsement within the Church. Most of the original disciples of Jesus adhered to it. But as the work of Paul progressed, the Church became divided on the issue. Peter was won over to the broader viewpoint, although once he turned back from it under pressure from the Judaizing party. In a Church distressed by such a question we can well imagine the significance of a story in which Jesus dealt with the need of a Gentile woman.

It has often been assumed that the narrow attitude of the apostles, in contrast to Paul, was due entirely to their blindness and their deep national prejudice. That is decidedly unfair to them. The responsibility must be carried further back. We dare not assume an unconditional contrast between an universal-minded Jesus and Jewish-minded disciples. When Jesus was sending the disciples out to preach and to heal, He set a definite limit to their ministry. ' Go not into the way of the Gentiles and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not ; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' The disciples were commanded to pass by the Gentiles in their ministry. Shall we blame them when later they tried, in opposition to Paul, to preserve this as a rule for the Church ? There is also indisputable evidence in the Gospels that Jesus considered His mission to be a mission to the lost sheep of His own race. There were many Gentiles in Palestine among whom He might have taught ; there was no external hindrance to prevent Him undertaking a mission to Gentiles, but He did not do it. The fact that any dealings He had with Gentiles are recorded as unusual instances indicates the general rule which prevailed in His ministry. Why He set this limitation upon His own work is too broad a question to be entered upon here. It was certainly not due to any narrowness nor was it a concession to the national prejudices of His countrymen, as some have suggested. It was a temporary limitation, most likely with the purpose of concentrating His efforts upon a people prepared by the prophets to respond to the fullness of God's revelation. The time was short and there could be no diffusion of energies over a wide surface if the foundations of the Kingdom were to be well and truly laid. That Jesus intended the limitation to be temporary is certain, for His compassion went out to the ' other sheep which are not of this fold.' He called Himself not the light of the Jews but the light of the world. His gospel is in every segment a universal gospel and shows at no point any trace of Jewish particularism. One can see then with plainness what happened. The disciples erected



the temporary limitation into an absolute limitation, being helped into their mistake by Jewish national feeling and inbred exclusiveness which still were strong in them. This accounts reasonably for the narrow attitude they maintained in the Apostolic Church. But is it not also reasonable to suppose that already in Jesus' lifetime they were making the same mistake? And if Jesus saw that they misunderstood Him on so vital a point, would He not undertake to set them right? And what better occasion could He find to do it than when a Gentile woman in great need and with passionate faith in Him appealed for His help? Finally, what sharper instrument could He use to get His instruction home than a sly, half-humorous ridicule? Let us read the story with this background to help us.

The silence of Jesus when the woman first made her appeal heard is the initial problem. It has not been understood because it has been considered only in relationship to the woman. When Jesus was finally to grant the request and laud the faith demonstrated, why did He at first remain silent? It has always been noted as a most unusual behaviour for Jesus in the face of need. But when we understand that Jesus purposed to use this interview for the exposure of a deeply-fixed narrowness in the viewpoint of His disciples, Jesus' behaviour is seen in a very different light. He remained silent because He knew that in a moment the disciples would begin telling Him what He should do. He knew only too well their unfriendly attitude toward non-Jews. His purpose was to draw them out and let them express themselves. This masterly conduct of a situation by Jesus is seen elsewhere in the Gospels. His handling of the religious legalist in the incident which led up to the Parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates the same power. He had a way of leading a man on to expose himself and show himself in his true colours. Jesus' silence was part of that serpentine wisdom with which He sought to entrap men and set them in a position where they could no longer escape the point of the sword of truth.

The disciples did as Jesus expected. They besought Him, 'Send her away; for she crieth after us.' Most of the old and new commentators tell us that the disciples meant, 'Send her away with her request granted.' The Greek word used does not necessarily require that meaning, but it can bear it legitimately. One wonders why, if the disciples really wished Jesus to grant the request, they did not say so more definitely. The truth is that this meaning has been chosen because it was assumed that both Jesus' silence and His state-

ment of an exclusive mission in v.<sup>24</sup> expressed at least a seeming unwillingness on the part of Jesus to act, and that the disciples in speaking must have been advising a different course from what Jesus seemed inclined to take. Jesus' words in v.<sup>24</sup> are understood as addressed to the disciples and as objecting to what they proposed. The whole interpretation rests upon a false assumption. The disciples' words may be taken at their face value; they express only a desire to be rid of the woman. It was not her importunity which annoyed them. In a Jewish woman they would rather have been touched by that. Her need and her evident faith would have won them to her side and made them supplicants for her. It was her foreign nationality that set them against her and hardened them against the appeal of her need. So far as they were concerned, she was outside the range of their compassion. A similar limit upon the scope of compassion can be seen in modern days by any observant person. People who would weep for the distresses of a fellow-countryman and do all in their power to help will remain cruelly and heartlessly unmoved when the person in distress belongs to an alien race. This is particularly true when there has recently been conflict between the countries of the two persons involved. The emotion of nationality enters in to counteract the impulse of compassion. What Jesus would think of a limitation of sympathy after this order in His disciples, we can have no doubt. His teaching elsewhere makes it perfectly plain.

Jesus' first words were spoken to the woman, apparently in compliance with the instructions of the disciples. He is playing a part. He bows to their will.—Yes! He will send her away.—It can hardly be doubted that the woman at once detected Jesus' intention, not understanding exactly what He was about, but certain at least that He did not intend her to take His words as an expression of His mind toward her. Jesus said what the disciples wanted Him to say. It is significant that He used words which the disciples had heard from Him before and upon the basis of which they had given free reign to their nationalism in determining their attitude to non-Jews. The result was to make them all the more assured in their denial of the foreigner's plea. The fact that v.<sup>24</sup>, following directly the speech of the disciples, is introduced by 'But he answered,' may seem to indicate that He must have been addressing not the woman but the disciples. That, however, is not necessary. The conjunctive particle may be used without opposing or adversative force, serving merely to

accomplish the transition from one speech to another. Jesus is answering the woman, but His words are at the same time His response to what the disciples said. And the words which said one thing to the disciples said something very different to the woman. He let her read something in His face, in His tone, in His manner, of which the others were not aware. He made use of a secondary means of communication that the woman might know that He had no desire for her to go away. That she persisted in her appeal was due to the fact that behind the words of refusal she was able to read a concern for her need and her sorrow. The simple and yet wonderfully powerful three words which she now spoke to Jesus: 'Lord, help me,' reflect not despair but confidence. Despair would not have said so little.

We are prepared now to hear from Jesus' lips the pronouncement which has embarrassed Christians for generations by its seeming cruelty. 'It is not fair to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs.' Jesus is expressing not His own mind but what He knows is in the minds of His disciples. He brings out the full crudity and harshness of their attitude. Such a statement spoken with sincerity by Jesus would have crushed the woman before Him. But she was not crushed. Not at all! She knew well by this time what Jesus was doing. He was with her completely, and it was as though He and she were playing a game to make fools of the disciples. A deathly earnest game it was, by means of which He intended to humble these followers of His and

shame them for their narrowness. At the same time Jesus with that masterly power of His was causing her so to reveal the faith that was in her, the deep devotion and trust toward Him that possessed her soul, that one would have to be positively blind not to see the genuineness of her faith.

It is plain that the woman entered into the spirit of Jesus' game. She answered Him in kind. There is the same touch of banter in her words as in His. He used a diminutive for 'dogs' and she echoed it with a diminutive for 'crumbs.' She and Jesus had a perfect understanding of each other in that moment. It rejoiced the heart of Jesus to find here beyond the borders of His own land some one who so quickly responded to the outreaching of His spirit and became one of His fellowship in the truest and deepest sense. He had no need to ply His game any longer. It had gone far enough. It was time to let the disciples see that He had fooled them with a divinely wise kind of fooling. All He needed to do was to let loose the abundance of His compassion upon the woman: 'O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt.' That was enough for her. And it was enough for the disciples to show them that the compassion of their Master could never be held bound by any such superficial restraint as nationality. Jesus did not turn to the disciples and lecture them. He left them, humiliated and dazed, to think out for themselves the implications of what He had said and done in their presence.

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## Recent Foreign Theology.

### Incarnation as meaning of Christianity.

THIS is an admirable short treatment of a great theme.<sup>1</sup> Unlike most German theologians the author does not make the doctrine of justification by faith central, but the Incarnation, and thus he gains a wider outlook. He, too, is not so enslaved by Luther as not to be responsive to more recent thinking. He emphasizes the reality of the humanity of Jesus, and does not virtually deify it as does the doctrine, the *communicatio idiomatum*. It may be he too sharply opposes the divinity to the humanity

to secure the perfect unity of the person. He is most appreciative of Irenæus among the Fathers (p. 8). He assigns two merits to Schleiermacher—the definition of Christianity as piety and the centrality of Christ in that piety (p. 12 f.). He does justice to Harnack's intention in his popular lectures on *What is Christianity?*, but considers his historical basis as confined to the Synoptics not broad enough. He would include the Johannine and Pauline interpretations (p. 15). Of Troeltsch he is more critical (p. 18). He takes the whole New Testament as his basis. He puts Christianity in contrast to all other religions as the only divine answer to the unanswered questions of all other religions (p. 23). In this judgment he seems to me

<sup>1</sup> *Die Menschwerdung Gottes als Sinn des Christentums*, von Paul Blau (C. Bertelsmann, Gütersloh; M. 1.60).



to have been led astray by the Barthian school. My conviction is that man's seeking God is due to God's drawing man, and that there is some contact with the divine reality wherever there is the sincere quest. It is to dishonour God's Fatherhood to suppose that He does not impart Himself in the measure in which men are able and willing to receive Him. This is, however, the only serious dissent I should offer. The Incarnation is divine concealment as well as revelation; and the work of Christ in reconciling God and man must be seen in the light of the Incarnation, God as man and in man (p. 25). His independence is shown in his abandonment of the purely eschatological conception of the Kingdom of God, prevalent in Lutheranism, for the more recent conception of the Kingdom as an already present sovereign activity of God (p. 26) and this he connects with the Spirit's dwelling and working in man (p. 28). The conception of Incarnation, God becoming man, God as and in man, he applies to the Word of God (p. 31 f.), the Sacrament (pp. 33-35), and the Church (p. 35 f.). There is in each the divine content in the imperfect human vessel. Christianity is religion, 'nay, the religion, the only one, which deserves this name, because only in it the relation of man to God is given in the Incarnation of the Logos' (p. 36). Christianity, however, is also ethics and world-view. He regards it as an injury that Christianity is to-day regarded as essentially ethics. He contrasts morality as the activity of the free good man; human self-sufficiency with the morals (*das Sittliche*), the working in man of God's grace. Here the criticism made above applies. God is in human goodness, whether His grace is known or not. The Christian world-view, having seen God in Christ, sees Him in all and through all, not as in mysticism, where man seeks to ascend to God, nor as in pantheism, where God is all, and all is God (pp. 45-48). Bravely he opposes the Nazi ideology. Anti-Semitism and Pan-Germanism are rebuked in the sarcasm that it was God's tragedy that He had to speak to men by the people that has become the world's curse, and in another language than the German (p. 31). In morals the swastika displaces the Cross (p. 37). I can warmly commend the book.

### Calvin and Justification.

THE author of this book<sup>1</sup> offers in its eighty-four pages a minute exposition of Calvin's teaching of a

<sup>1</sup> *Calvin und die Rechtfertigung*, von Dr. theol. Wilhelm-Albert Hauck (C. Bertelsmann, Gütersloh; M. 2.40).

doctrine which he describes in the sub-title as 'The Heart of Evangelical Doctrine.' Of his work he says: 'Its content is an indication from the sources of the attitude to the problem involved in our theme. The intention can be summarized as follows—to present impressively to the reader the central problem of the Reformational proclamation, namely, the evangelical doctrine of justification not by works of the law, but only by faith. Its final aim, however, is to stir up the reader to his own reflections. . . . If it has only in some measure succeeded in this, and if in some readers it has also awakened the joy of a conscious evangelical attitude of faith, or has strengthened it, then it has perfectly fulfilled its aim' (p. 84). It has certainly stirred up one reader to his own reflections, but these have led not to satisfaction with, but dissent from, the exposition of the doctrine here presented. The treatment is exhaustive; the author follows Calvin through all the turns and twists of his subtle dialectic in meeting the criticism of his opponents, and in trying to reconcile contradictory statements of the Bible. The German exposition in translations or paraphrases is followed by full Latin quotations from the Institute, and supplemented in the notes by French quotations from Sermons. There is very much repetition. The assumptions are two—man=sin; God=grace—but these assumptions, the fall, natural corruption, total depravity in man, grace as the free predetermination by God of each man's destiny, are not discussed, or justified. The two divisions of the book deal with (a) Justification as a judicial act of God's grace, and (b) Justification in its functioning in man (or justification and good works). The Preface indicates that the writer has the German situation in view; the controversy with Catholicism still goes on, and there are sentiments and themes current there in view of which an exposition of the evangelical faith is called for. It may be questioned whether even the German situation does not call for a much more modern and thus convincing presentation than such a return to Calvin. In the situation in this country that assuredly is the need. Against the self-sufficiency of human civilization and culture to-day it is necessary to assert man's need of salvation from God. *Sola gratia sola fide, soli deo gloria* may still be our watch-word. While for Paul in his controversy with Pharisaic Judaism, and for the Reformers in their conflict with Roman Catholicism the forensic aspect of salvation, justification by faith alone and not by works, was necessarily of primary importance, it is not so for us. God's personal approach and appeal to man as grace in Christ, man's personal response to Christ in

faith—the fellowship with God restored in forgiveness which means not only cancelled guilt, but renewed freedom—can be much more adequately presented in Paul's 'faith-mysticism,' which I believe was for Paul himself more central than justification by faith. We cannot make the dogmatic use of the Bible Calvin in his exposition made. He presents as permanent in God the contrasts of God as Judge and as Father, which for us are phases of a progressive revelation. As revealed in Christ God is Father; judgeship is included in His Fatherhood, but subordinated to it, and not co-ordinated with it. Many of the difficulties that existed for Calvin do not exist for us, for we do not treat the Old Testament as being as authoritative as is the New, nor an interpretation by an apostle as equal to an utterance of our Lord. With Calvin we may still affirm God's sovereignty, but it is not the same kind, for it is love. Hence a book such as that under review may have some scholarly interest,

although it seems to me to do what has often been done before, and offer no fresh light on the subject, but here at least it has no practical value as a commendation of the Gospel of the Reformation.

I cannot close without a protest against what seems to me to be nothing less than a prostitution of Christian scholarship to National-Socialist prejudice, not the first I have come across. On p. 34 stands the heading: 'The "Jews" as terrifying example of legalistic righteousness of works'; and in the note on p. 35 stand the words, 'our politically well-founded aversion and resistance against the "freemasonry" Talmud Judaism of our days.' The description of the Jews as 'the chosen people' is repudiated on the ground that 'for nearly 2000 years already the heavy curse of the Cross of Christ lies upon them.' German theology will forfeit any esteem it has enjoyed if such offences of partisanship become common.

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*London.*

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## Contributions and Comments.

### The Parable of the Unjust Steward.

Luke xvi. 13: 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon.'

THE Parable of the Unjust Steward is one of the difficulties of the New Testament. Expositors have found it hard to understand and show in any convincing way how this most unedifying tale of rascality can be interpreted for edification. Fantastic, unnatural, and absurd interpretations of it abound. The steward has been taken to mean, in turn, the Jewish religious leaders, the tax-collectors, Pilate, Judas, Satan, penitent sinners, Paul, and even Christ Himself. The significance of the other characters has been equally variously understood. It is hardly too much to say that there is scarcely another passage in Scripture that has so baffled its interpreters.

Even where the interpretation escapes the fantastic, it is usually hopelessly inadequate. Recently I heard a fine sermon preached on our Lord's observation, made at the conclusion of the Parable: 'The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.' But in the introduction the preacher laboured, and laboured is the word, to show how this was the

key to all the meaning there was in it. The whole point of this Parable was simply to urge upon Christians the virtue of wholeheartedness in their high calling. It might seem an odd way to teach such a lesson; but, said the preacher, that only went to show how daringly unconventional Jesus was in His teaching methods.

It just won't do. As reasonably might one argue the story of Bill Sykes to be wonderfully apt to teach kindness to animals, because that brutal murderer was, in his own rough way, fond of his dog.

No, this point made in the above quotation, with all its relevance to the Parable, is totally insufficient to support its full weight and must be treated as secondary. Make as much of it as you can, the incongruity still remains. Some other foundation than this must be found for this very queer tale, ere it can stand four-square in Scripture. It can be found, too, though the paragraph division of the Authorized Version somewhat conceals it. The words that do supply the key to what appears at first to be a riddle in the Bible, occur, in fact, in the thirteenth verse of the chapter: 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon.' Read in their light, the Parable of the Unjust Steward proves to be



entirely relevant and at the same time one of the most biting indictments of worldliness ever made.

The vast confusion that surrounds the interpretation of this Parable is due to the fact that commentators have failed to observe that it runs on lines quite different from most of the other Parables of Jesus. Generally speaking, we find in the Parables of our Lord certain scenes and happenings, credible on the plane of our common everyday life, taken to illustrate and explain the facts and truths of the higher life of the spirit, and so taken because it can be said that such and such earthly scenes and events are like the spiritual events and truths to which they are intended to lead the mind. In the Parable of the Sower, for instance, we readily see the likeness between the sower's labour and the labour of the Son of God sowing the good seed of the Kingdom; and there are other resemblances we can appreciate with ease. The Parable of the Unjust Steward, however, is constructed on quite a different plan. It teaches not by resemblance, but by contrast. Many of the other Parables begin, 'The Kingdom of God is like'; this one might well begin with 'The Kingdom of God is unlike.'

Jesus had just finished adding one more immortal word to the people in general about the Kingdom of God, in the Parable of the Prodigal Son. There He had endeavoured to describe, so that all might understand, the spirit that rules where God rules—the atmosphere of happiness, charity, and sanctity which men breathe in God's Kingdom. But in that story He had mentioned also the Far Country where the Prodigal had wasted his substance in riotous living, where men lose their friends when they lose their money, where the portion of the poor is with the swine and their food the husks that the swine would eat—a hard land and a merciless, the Kingdom of Mammon. Then He turned to His disciples. They were those who had forsaken much, some of them all, to follow Him. They had deliberately turned their back upon the Kingdom of Mammon, the great Lord of Gain and the Archduke of Profit, to enter into the Kingdom of God, under the leadership of One who had not where to lay his head. Their Rubicon had been crossed. That they might rightly appreciate the change, that they might properly value their new position under God, by contrast with any that Mammon, the Lord of Materialism, could offer them, Jesus would have them for a moment or two revisit the Far Country, where Mammon ruled, and see for themselves with undimmed eyes just the sort of thing they had left behind.

There is first of all the rich man, the natural aristocrat of the country, living in leisured indolence upon the fruits of other men's labour. An absentee landlord, he lives in the distant capital, troubling himself neither to manage his estates nor to see that they are properly managed. He is content if he can draw a steady and ample income from them. There is the steward, who is only too pleased to manage the rich man's estates for him. Being a true Mammonite, such a position of trust is only a golden opportunity to fill his own pockets and have a good time. But in the Kingdom of Mammon there is not even that dubious kind of honour that is supposed to exist among thieves, and very soon an informer is whispering in the rich man's ear the whole tale of his factor's misdemeanours. The steward is brought to book and given notice of dismissal. He doesn't waste his nervous energy in guilty blushes. He needs it all to face the awkward fact, not uncommon in Mammon's realm, that in a few days he will be out on the street without a job, even as he is now without a character. What's to be done? Soft living has made him too weak to dig, and to beg he is ashamed. In the Kingdom of God it is the sinner who is ashamed, he is the failure; in the Kingdom of Mammon it is the beggar. This precious rascal, who would be ashamed to beg, is not a bit ashamed to use the few days' grace accorded him by his easy-going employer, to cheat his master further in a peculiarly impudent and brazen way. Having nothing more to hope for from the rich man, he bethinks himself of the rich man's debtors. They might be useful friends in the uncertain future. The steward knows the quickest way to a debtor's heart. Cancel his debts. He cannot do that altogether; but he is very generous with them. He can afford to be when the loss is somebody else's. The debtors, on their part, don't ask any questions. They accept the remission granted them with alacrity, and thereby give the steward a certain claim on them for the future. If then he comes to them for support in whatever new business he may be engaged, with the tale of being dismissed by a hard master because he let poor folks off too easily and wouldn't put the screw on to get money out of them for the landlord to splash about up in town, the astute steward reckons to have them in a cleft stick. Some of the more simple may believe him, in which case he will claim their gratitude. Others who won't believe him, since they know too much about him, may nevertheless feel themselves obliged to pretend that they do, as an alternative to confessing themselves parties to his unblushing fraud.

To save their face, they may deem it best to imitate the gratitude of their simpler neighbours and lend a helping hand to the poor martyr.

The rich man, of course, gets to know of this last trick. But it is too late to recover the money he has lost by it. The bills were the only evidence of the debts, and these have been formally receipted and passed out of his hands. He is too much a man of the world to cry over spilt milk, and, moreover, his sense of humour is tickled by the cool impudence and effective simplicity of the steward's move. The man is a caution. He has to admire his nerve. In a final interview he tells the steward he is a clever and audacious fellow; but at the same time he is more convinced than ever that such cleverness and audacity will be much better displayed in somebody else's service. And so they part.

Such are the ethics of rascaldom. These are the sort of people you find and this is the sort of thing that goes on wherever the spirit of materialism is dominant, in that area of life where Mammon is acknowledged to be king. The story is a choice bit of satire revealing our Lord in an unusual rôle, that of the smiler with the knife under his cloak, stabbing evil to the heart by getting us to laugh at it. It is no travesty of fact, but perfectly true to life. Read such modern writers as make a special study of Mammonism, writers like Upton Sinclair, Jack London and Sinclair Lewis, or keep your eye on the columns of the newspapers that deal with cases tried in our courts of law, and you will realize that this Parable is photographic in its veracity. Situations like that described are arising every day. Much of the world's life is shaped and coloured by men like the rich man, who neglect the responsibilities of their advantageous position for the sake of self-indulgence, and allow important affairs that they should control to be mismanaged by others. The steward, who swindled himself into difficulties and tried to swindle himself out of them, is almost a stock character in modern civilization. The debtors who asked no questions and the tale-bearer who gave the game away, we all know these people; perhaps at some time we have been mixed up with them. It is a faithful picture of a certain type of life.

What this Parable is calculated to bring home to us is just what we escape from when we pledge ourselves to Christ as servants of the Kingdom of God. As such we are definitely finished with the slack and devious ways of the Kingdom of Mammon. Sometimes there is a depressing one-sided insistence made on the price a man has to pay for the true Christian life, the sacrifice it entails, the things

you have to give up. This story reminds us that many of the things we have to give up are such as to make us unfeignedly thankful that we can give them up. To read of some of the antics in the Kingdom of Mammon may make us smile when we are not affected by them. But to be involved in them, to be a party to them, is anything but a joke. Much of the unhappiness of the world, the restlessness and strain, the discontent that gnaws at the heart of millions, are due to the fact that these same millions feel themselves to be caught in the net of an unworthy kind of life, marked by low and selfish motives, crooked and insincere, and are unwilling or afraid to be quite honest, straightforward, and selfless. They have at least one foot in the Kingdom of Mammon.

But it has been proved before and is being proved to-day, most conspicuously where the Oxford Group Movement is felt, that once a man allows the Spirit of God in Christ to lift him clear of the moral mud of that shady realm, his only wonder and regret is that he did not let God have His way earlier with him. It is of crucial importance for the living of a full, fruitful, and joyful life to realize the gulf that divides God and Mammon and the impossibility of serving both. It is a tremendous relief to the mind and heart just to make up your mind to cut free from Mammon and move to God, to be able to make a clean breast of things and then go forward resolved upon having nothing to hide, as you know you have nothing to fear. To have done with shifts and dodges, to have made amends for wrongs done, to be able to produce your books at any time and look all men in the face, and at the same time to live freely and openly committed to God's service, secretly sustained and guided by God's spirit, that is the experience to which Christ invites you; and it is an experience of life worth any initial cost that may have to be paid for it. The men who have paid it will tell you so, the very look in their eyes will tell you. They will say to you, indeed, that there is nothing for which they thank God more than just this—that you *cannot* serve God and Mammon. ALEXANDER KING.

Edinburgh.

### The Significance of נָס in Genesis v. 24 and Psalm xxxix. 13.

THIS simple note had its origin in observation of the simple fact that נָס is used in both Gn 5<sup>24</sup> and Ps 39<sup>13</sup>: 'Enoch walked with God; and he was not (נָס); for God took him': 'O spare me, that



I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more (אֶחָד). From these two verses very contrary inferences have sometimes been drawn as to the Old Testament expectation of a future life. Ps 39<sup>13</sup> has been adduced as an illustration of the dismal and all but hopeless outlook of even the pious Israelite, while Gn 5<sup>24</sup> has been cited as one of the strongest 'intimations of immortality' in the Old Testament. The two verses, however, can hardly be so opposed in meaning or effect when the keyword of both is the same.

In Ps 39 the language of the Authorized Version might suggest that the writer expected that after death he would cease to be; but אֶחָד does not connote non-existence. The Prayer-Book Version runs, 'O spare me that I may recover strength, before I go hence and be seen no more.' Driver in his Commentary on *Genesis* says in a note on 5<sup>24</sup>, that אֶחָד is used of 'sudden inexplicable disappearances,' though 'sudden inexplicable disappearance' is not a very apt description of death by ordinary process of Nature. The idea that death ends all for the individual does not indeed appear to be primitive. A passage like the Witch of Endor chapter (1 S 28), which presumably embodies a primitive tradition, affords evidence of an early belief in survival, as does also the doctrine of Sheol. Sheol was the abode of the dead, but in Sheol the dead did not cease to be or lose their identity, and the pious Israelite's hope of resurrection was the hope of deliverance out of Sheol and restoration to fullness of life. Heaven was the abode of God alone, or of God and the angels, and presumably not even Enoch and Elijah, the two exceptional men who did not taste of death, were supposed to have their dwelling-place in heaven; but they were doubtless believed to be alive and blessed. The Transfiguration narrative of the Gospels attributes to Moses and Elijah not only continued existence, but also mental activity and interest in the work of Jesus Christ. A late passage like Ec 12<sup>7</sup> speaks of a return to God at death: 'Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it'; but the significance of this return of the spirit is uncertain, and to the writer of Ecclesiastes it may have meant absorption in the Divine. Ps 39 then does not exclude the possibility of survival. The writer did not expect that death would bring annihilation upon him. But the state to which he expected to pass was perhaps only just preferable to non-existence. The life which he had known would come to an end. As a spirit, he might retain his identity, but he would no longer be what he had been. All the goodness of this life

would cease, and who could tell what of good another life might have in store? Nothing more definite in the way of negation can be read into the use of אֶחָד.

Gn 5<sup>24</sup>, upon the other hand, is positive in content and rich in hope. It connotes more than 'sudden inexplicable disappearance.' In point of fact it offers an explanation of Enoch's disappearance: 'He was not, for God took him.' The interpretation adopted by later Judaism can be seen in He 11<sup>5</sup>: 'By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.' The original may imply something less definite, but the writer of *Genesis* can hardly have intended to claim for Enoch less than continued existence, a continued existence which was eminently desirable. His words cannot well be interpreted simply as a pious description of death or as a pious mode of attributing all events to the direct act of God. They must always have been intended to signify that what befell Enoch was something quite out of the ordinary. They imply not only survival, but also some measure of fellowship with God in the life to which Enoch passed. Such fellowship he had enjoyed during his life on earth. 'Walking with God,' presumably connotes more than 'walking before God.' It implies not only faith and obedience or righteousness, but also some measure of Divine fellowship. Both Gn 5 and He 11 emphasize the piety of Enoch's earthly life and imply a causal connexion between it and the mode of his disappearance from the sight of men. A. B. Davidson in his *Old Testament Theology* suggests that the pious Israelite's hope of continuing life came to depend more and more upon his experience of fellowship with God in this life: the righteous man who had enjoyed such fellowship here could be confident that he would not be deprived of it hereafter. Gn 5<sup>24</sup> claims for Enoch that he attained to fellowship with God upon the earth, and that he passed from earth to a life of closer fellowship. Of course one cannot read into an isolated verse of *Genesis* any such conception of future fellowship with God as is found in Jn 14, but the root idea does seem to be present in it. Now the use of אֶחָד—and here is the point and conclusion of this note—is not inconsistent with rich hopefulness regarding the future life. Gn 5<sup>24</sup> is certainly positive and hopeful, though it says of Enoch אֶחָד. The significance of אֶחָד in Ps 39<sup>13</sup> cannot well be wholly negative.

JOHN MUIR.

Paisley.



## The Ascension in the Fourth Gospel.

IN his article 'The Ascension in the Fourth Gospel' (THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, March 1939, p. 285), the Rev. J. S. Billings asks with reference to Jn 20<sup>17</sup>: 'Can it be that St. John intends us to understand that the Ascension is actually taking place at this time?' and adds that if this view has already appeared in print, he would be glad to know the reference.

In Moffatt's *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*<sup>3</sup>, p. 536, appears the following: 'In the Fourth Gospel the ascension takes place on the day of the resurrection; Jesus then comes (20<sup>19</sup>), as he had promised, back to his disciples, and breathes on them (not sends<sub>5</sub> to them) the holy Spirit, which he had also promised (15<sup>26</sup> 16<sup>7</sup>). This is the real *παρουσία* of the Fourth Gospel, and after 20<sup>25-29</sup> there is no word of any subsequent departure any more than in Mt 28.'

Of the many suggested explanations of the apparent discrepancy between Jn 20<sup>17</sup> and 20<sup>27</sup> one of the earliest and most curious is given in Neoplatonic terminology by Marius Victorinus, *Against Arius*, iii. 15 (Migne, *PL*, viii. 1110a-c). According to him, Christ, before He could allow Himself to be touched, had to go to the Father (*corporaliter atque animaliter, id est, in id quod in se pater fuerat penetrandum potentialiter atque existentialiter*) with the human life which He had recovered from Hades (as distinct from His divine life as Logos), in order to have it sanctified.

Probably the simplest (though not necessarily the correct) explanation is the suggested emendation *μή πτόου* for *μή μου ἄπτοου* in Jn 20<sup>17</sup> (see J. H. Bernard *ad loc.* in *I.C.C.*).

F. F. BRUCE.

The University, Leeds.

IN the March number the Rev. J. S. Billings asks for any comment on the interpretation of Jn 20 according to which the Ascension takes place on Easter Day. He will have seen how in the February number Dr. Macgregor argues that this was the more primitive view-point and quotes, among other passages, from the Gospel of Peter, where the

angel says to the women, 'He is risen and gone away thither where He was sent (*ἀνέστη . . . καὶ ἀπῆλθεν ἐκεῖ ὅθεν ἀπεστάλη*)'. This is apparently how the passage stood in the Syriac Diatessaron,<sup>1</sup> for Aphrahat so quotes, 'The angels answered Mary, "He has risen and gone to Him who sent Him"' (*ܐܢܓܠܝܢ ܕܥܠܝܐ ܕܡܪܝܡ ܕܥܠܝܐ ܕܡܪܝܡ*).<sup>2</sup> There is more than one link between the Gospel of Peter and the Diatessaron text, notably the lament of bystanders in Lk 23<sup>48</sup>, 'Woe unto us for our sins . . .' This view seems also to have lasted on to late times in Egypt; in the Book of the Resurrection (Coptic Apocrypha, ed. E. A. Budge) there is an elaborate vision of the Ascension and Enthronement on the Resurrection Day, and these same words are put on the lips of the Apostles after the first appearance, as they tell the good news to the absent Thomas (p. 212): 'Be not an unbeliever concerning the resurrection of our Saviour, but believe that He hath risen and hath departed to His Father.' And the appearance to Thomas follows.

C. A. PHILLIPS.

Bournemouth.

AT the close of his article on 'The Ascension in the Fourth Gospel' on p. 285 of the March issue, your correspondent asks if a similar interpretation has already appeared in print.

E. F. Scott, *The Fourth Gospel*<sup>3</sup>, p. 307, presents a similar view. ('Since the meeting with Mary, His Ascension had been accomplished').

G. H. C. Macgregor in his commentary on 'John' in the *Moffatt New Testament Commentary*, expounds it in the same way, saying that the Ascension is apparently assumed to take place between vv. 18 and 19 (pp. 359, 360.) Of the account of the Bestowal of the Spirit he says (p. 365) ' . . . this scene is for John almost certainly the counterpart of Pentecost.'

The earliest suggestion of this line of interpretation which I can trace is in Dr. R. H. Strachan's book, *The Fourth Gospel*, published by the S.C.M. in 1917. On p. 226 he says, of the appearances in

<sup>1</sup> The popular Gospel text of the Eastern Church up till the fourth century.

<sup>2</sup> Dem. xx. 11; Wright, 384; Graffin, *Patr. Or.* i. 909.



vv. 19-29, that they are appearances *after* the Ascension; and of ἀναβαίνω (= 'I am ascending'), 'The action is identical with the act of speaking.'

In To 12<sup>20</sup> ἀναβαίνω clearly means 'I am on the point of ascending.'

Raphael is speaking to Tobit and his son, and bids them farewell, bidding them give thanks to

God, and proceeds, διότι ἀναβαίνω πρὸς τὸν ἀποστείλαντά με. . . v. 21 continues, καὶ ἀνέστησαν, καὶ οὐκ ἔτι εἶδον αὐτόν, implying that the 'ascension' had taken place before they arose.

There was a note on μὴ μου ἄπτον (Jn 20<sup>17</sup>) in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, xl. 527.

W. G. ESSAME.

*Boxhill-on-Sea.*

## Entre Nous.

### People without a Voice.

'In more primitive communities the process of teaching adults to read is being pressed forward in many parts of the world. Dr. Frank Laubach has perhaps done more than any one to serve the Church by inventing methods of teaching adults to read. He himself was a delegate to the Madras Conference, and immediately after it he wrote in passionate advocacy to every other delegate—"Eleven hundred million people, almost two-thirds of the world, had no delegate at the Conference, never had a delegate anywhere, are voiceless, for they cannot read nor write nor vote. In Asia and Africa over a billion people are illiterate, over half the human race, nine persons out of every ten. This cold paper cannot tell you what that means. You think it is a pity they cannot read, but the real tragedy is that they cannot speak. . . . We had no indignation for a billion illiterates. It is a human weakness not to realize suffering unless we hear a cry. The illiterate majority of the human race does not know how to make their cry reach us. . . . I have not only seen these people across Asia and Africa, but have sat beside many of them and taught them one by one, and have seen a new light kindle in their eyes, love and hope dawn as they began to step out of blindness."'

The above is a quotation from Mr. Basil Mathews'

*Through Tragedy to Triumph* (Edinburgh House Press; 2s. net). This is the most popular, most easy to read account of the International Missionary Conference at Madras. It is written in Mr. Mathews' easy telling style and contains a wealth of illustration. It is a book to put into the hands of all those who have not read the fuller documented account of the Conference. It is a book also which no one can read without being deeply stirred.

### Faith.

In *The Christian World* for 18th May, Mrs. Forsyth Andrews gives a translation of a paragraph which she came across in *Le Lien*, the monthly magazine of the French Protestant Church in Soho. 'In the midst of the sorrows which weigh her down, Frau Niemöller has just had one great joy. Her three oldest sons came to her lately and told her that they wished to become ministers like their father.' And Dr. Niemöller has been Hitler's prisoner, in solitary confinement, for more than a year. May we be strengthened in our understanding of that truer Germany.

### Character.

I hope that the reader may constantly feel, across the ephemeral movement of one existence, what in



Marie Curie was even more rare than her work or her life: the immovable structure of a character; the stubborn effort of an intelligence; the free immolation of a being that could give all and take nothing, could even receive nothing; and, above all, the quality of a soul in which neither fame nor adversity could change the exceptional purity.<sup>1</sup>

### A Reasonable Faith.

Everything in and about Sir Wilfred Grenfell's *A Labrador Logbook* (Hodder and Stoughton; 5s. net) is attractive. There is first of all Sir Wilfred Grenfell's Preface in which he speaks about the navigation of his own material boat along a coast beset with uncharted rocks and 'shoals and icebergs which cannot be charted anyway. I have seen many larger and better-equipped vessels than mine leave their bones along the shore, and many more succumb to storms and seas, solely because they were not properly prepared to meet them.' Having had to navigate this boat, he noted in his logbook every possible source of help, hastily coloured sketches of cliffs and fjords, and pictures taken from the air, 'by means of which distant parts of the Labrador are made safer for those seafarers coming after us who are willing to make use of them.'

In the same way is *A Labrador Logbook*, a collection of quotations and passages which have helped him 'in that voyage of adventure called human life, which every one must navigate alone.' Along with these are extracts from his own writings 'which friends have been kind enough to insist have helped them in these days of stress and perplexity.'

The variety and catholicity of the quotations are quite unusual and, so it seems to us, they are all good. We choose one piece of prose for quotation—from Grenfell's own writing—and one poem. We must not fail to add that the publishers have done their part and that the whole format of the book is attractive.

'What Christ demands is a reasonable faith, as he demands the service of our reason. It is the men of faith who have saved the world, not men of knowledge. There is no progress possible without faith. All prizes of life that are worth while are won by the

faith that makes us act. Without faith we win no real prizes and taste no lasting joys. This is equally true in business, science, politics, citizenship and domestic life. Control and exercise of the whole man are essential for the maintenance of a faith that has life. We cannot drift to Heaven like dead fish down a stream. The best definition of faith that I know is that it is "Reason grown courageous." Courage is the very essence of faith.'

Have you and I to-day

Stood silent, as with Christ, apart from joy, or  
fray

Of life, to see His Face;

To look, if but a moment, on its grace,  
And grow by brief companionship, more true,  
More nerved to lead, to dare, to do

For Him at any cost? Have we to-day  
Found time in thought, our hand to lay  
In His and thus compare

His Will with ours, and wear

The impress of His Wish? Be sure

Such contact will endure

Throughout the day; will help us walk erect  
Through storm and flood; detect

Within the hidden life sin's dross; its stain;

Revive a thought of love for Him again;

Steady the steps which waver; help us to see

The footpath meant for you, and me.

### Errata.

A printer's error in Dr. Lofthouse's article, 'The Righteousness of Jahveh,' which appeared in the May number (p. 345) is regretted—one letter having been omitted in Kautzsch's name.

We also regret two errors in the Rev. T. Nicklin's article, 'The Chronology of the New Testament,' which appeared in the June number. On page 421 column 2 line 5 for *alter* read *allow*, and line 15 for *involved* read *invoked*.

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Printed by MORRISON & GIBB LIMITED, Tanfield Works,  
and Published by T. & T. CLARK, 38 George Street,  
Edinburgh. It is requested that all literary communications be addressed to THE EDITOR, King's Gate, Aberdeen, Scotland.

<sup>1</sup> Eve Curie, *Madame Curie*.